

SIR GOOROODASS CENTENARY COMMEMORATION VOLUME

IVI

EDITED BY
ANATHNATH BASU



UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

1948

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ISSUED BY
GOURIMOHAN MITRA
ON BEHALF OF
SIR GOOROODASS CENTENARY COMMITTEE

PRICE RUPEES TEN. ONLY

PRINTED IN INDIA

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY NISHICHANDRA SEN,
SUPERINTENDENT (OFFG), CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY PRESS,
48, HAZRA ROAD, BALLIGUNGE, CALCUTTA

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PREFACE

The editor has pleasure in presenting Sir Gooroodass Centenary Commemoration Volume to the readers. Unfortunately owing to various reasons including the communal troubles which paralysed the civic life of Calcutta for a long time, its publication has been greatly delayed, for which he expresses his sincere regrets. He takes this opportunity to convey his thanks to the contributors and others through whose willing and ungrudging cooperation alone it has been possible to prepare and publish this volume. On behalf of the Centenary Committee he would like to thank specially the authorities of the University of Calcutta for printing the volume free of cost and undertaking its publication. He also thanks the management of the University Press for the interest and care taken by them in seeing the work through.

TEACHERS' TRAINING DEPARTMENT,
CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY
26th January, 1948

ANATHNATH BASU

FOREWORD

Sir Gooroodass Banerjee was born a hundred years ago. That was a time when nothing was more common among a section of our fellow-countrymen than to attribute the military and commercial success of the West to the superiority of its ways of life. From that the easy deduction was made that Indians had only to discard all their traditional values and adopt western standards of life, thought and conduct in order to achieve national emancipation. In the controversy between the Anglicists and the Orientalists, the voice of progress had clearly spoken through the mouths of the former. But in the first flush of excitement over the enlightenment that came from the West, even many brilliant minds failed to distinguish between the universality of western Science and the relativity of western morals and culture. Macaulay who was inspired with the ideals of Roman Imperialism had thought of creating on Indian soil a class of native Englishmen to whom England would be their spiritual home and who would function as the bastions of British Imperialism in India.

Macaulay's dreams came very near fulfilment at one stage. But soon, men with finer and more courageous spirits rose and offered determined resistance to the campaign of spiritual enslavement which threatened to undermine the foundations of Indian civilisation. They realised and preached untiringly that the moral and spiritual values of Indian culture supplied a solid base for patriotism and national resurgence. They taught their contemporaries that India could never hope to use this fine instrument of knowledge that had come across the western seas to her own lasting good unless she possessed the courage to believe in herself and pride in her own history.

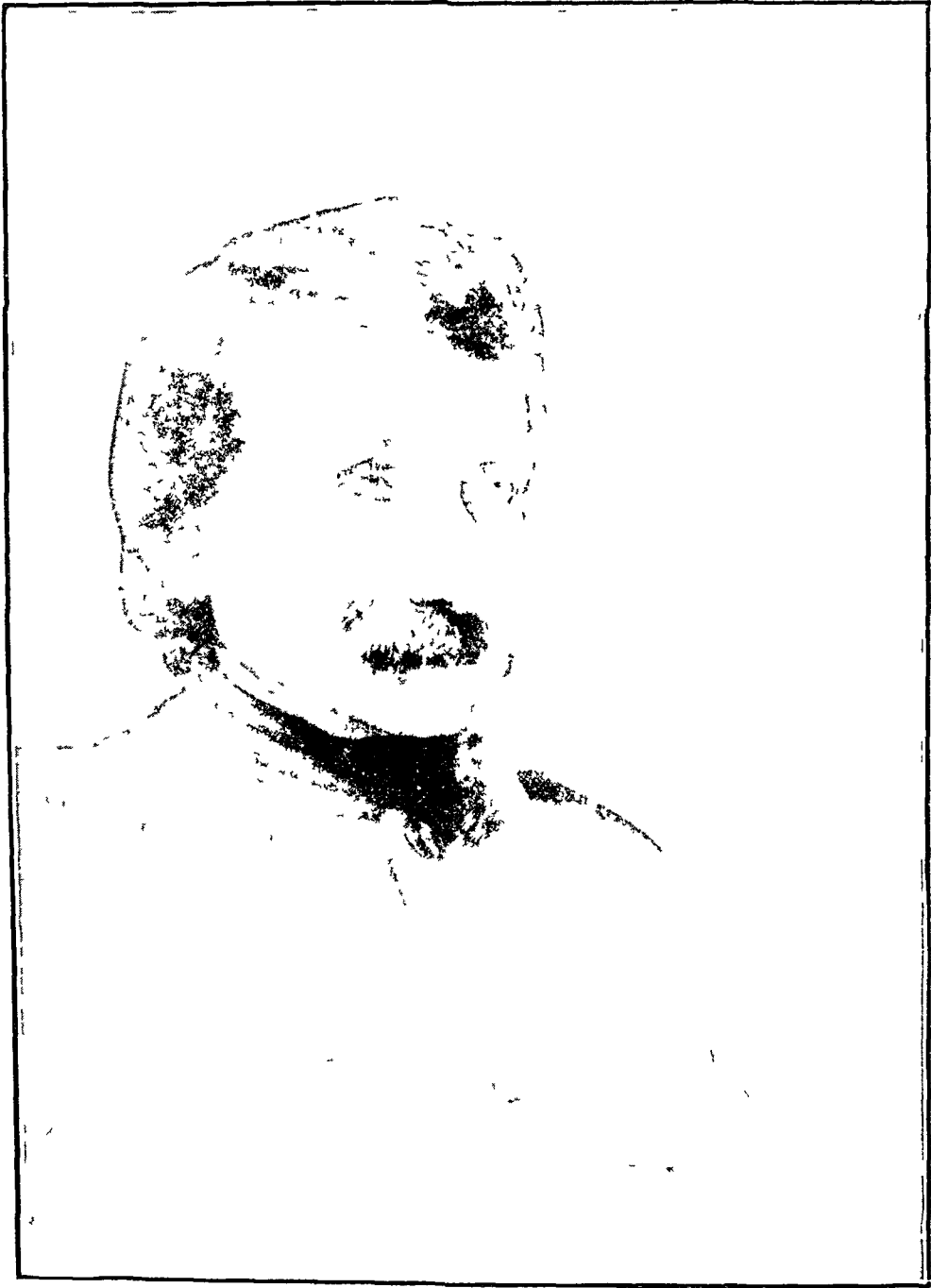
Sir Gooroodass was a pioneer among this band of teachers who may be termed the builders of our nation in the truest sense of the term. Having lost his father at a very early age, Gooroodass had the unique privilege of having his mother as his first greatest teacher. His mother, Sonamani Devi of hallowed memory possessed in her soul a treasure-house of the age-long wisdom of India. With intrepid courage and with an inflexible sense of duty, she set about her task of infusing into her son's mind the colours

and pattern of the Indian spiritual landscape. With what results, we all know and proudly acknowledge after the lapse of a century.

Though Gooroodass imbibed the first fruits of western learning and shone with equal ease and grace in many different spheres of public life and administration, he always modelled his conduct on Indian standards of simplicity and spiritual fervour. He was a hero and a representative man, representing a new age and a new synthesis. The East and the West blended in perfect harmony in him. Meek and full of humility he was a staunch and undaunted fighter for the cause of truth. And though a tough fighter, endowed with a rare courage, his life was mellowed with that love for humanity which was such a marked characteristic of his personality. Even while performing the humdrum duties of life he radiated sweetness and light and diffused a spiritual aroma. In all his utterances and actions he showed a fine balance of mind and a delicate sense of progress. He was India's first Indian Vice-Chancellor and his contributions to the cause of education are still gratefully remembered by his countrymen. He stood against the officialisation of the Indian universities under the new constitution and it was he who was instrumental in giving the senates at least a semblance of a democratic character by introducing representation of registered graduates. He was also one of the first to claim a place for the languages of the people in their sanctum of learning. While no politician himself, he was yet a patriot of the highest type. He realised the progressive rôle played by political forces in the country and stoutly supported the movement for the democratisation of the Senate of the Calcutta University, the anti-partition agitation and the movement for national education.

The centenary of his birth offers an opportunity to everyone of us to pay a tribute to this great son of India and learn from his life in humility and reverence. It is felt by the promoters of the centenary celebrations that a Commemoration volume consisting of a life-sketch of Sir Gooroodass and selections from his speeches and writings is the most fitting tribute that we can pay to his memory. The volume that is now being published will help the present generation to appreciate Sir Gooroodass by holding direct converse with his mind.

Syama Prasad Mukherjee



Born
26th January, 1844

SIR GOOROODASS BANERJEE

Died
2nd December, 1918

A SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

PRIYARANJAN SEN, M A.

The nineteenth century in Bengal produced a band of glorious men, and the centenaries of their birth have been justly observed in recent years. It is curious how they were born about the same time. Bankimchandra and Keshabchandra, the great Bengali litterateur and the great Bengali religious reformer, were born in the same year, 1838. Six years later, three other illustrious sons of Bengal were born in quick succession, and the centenary of their birth has been observed this year. One of these was W. C. Bonnerjee—Woomeshchandra Bonnerjee—one of the earliest builders of the Indian National Congress, one of those who wanted to give Indian political aspirations a direction and unity, to build on a plan of one nationhood and on an all-India basis; another was Girishchandra Ghose, the dramatist who toiled in the vineyard of Bengali drama for more than 40 years and brought in a rich harvest; the third was Gooroodass Banejee, a man who preferred to work in the quiet, but whose efforts were equally directed towards national regeneration, and for that he chose education as his field. It is the life and career of Gooroodass Banejee, which an attempt will be made in the following pages to present in outline.

Gooroodass's father, Ramchandra Banejee, hailed from a village in Diamond Harbour. He was a clerk in a commercial firm in Calcutta, and he was a pious man. He used to read the *Gita* every day, and would have liked to mould the character of the young child according to the great lessons imparted in that book. But he was destined to die early; when Gooroodass was barely three years old, two years and eight months in fact, he lost his father, and the task of bringing him up devolved entirely on the young widow, Gooroodass's mother, Sonamani Devi.

Sonamani Devi was the daughter of an orthodox Sanskrit scholar of repute. She was affectionate and kind-hearted, but she had her own ideas of discipline. She would never yield to any demands made by the child. Even when her own mother sided with the boy and against her, she would not budge. Time and again, her influence decided the issue for him. He would never dare disobey her. Had she not obtained him through the favour of

a saint whose spiritual power and holy rituals were invoked when the young woman had seemed not likely to bring forth any issue? This was the reason why he was named Gooroodass, the servant of the *guru* or spiritual preceptor. She held him therefore as a trust, and so dealt with him. First of all, his academic education needed her care, when the boy was about 8 years old, he was admitted into the General Assembly's Institution, but after a few months, as he was not keeping good health, he was transferred by his uncle to Oriental Seminary Branch Institution, because that would give the uncle an opportunity to keep the boy with him and under his own supervision. The mother, however, pointed out to her brother that such an arrangement would not be convenient, not only would that mean separation of the child from her but also because, in the crowded house of the uncle, the studies of little Gooroodass would be much disturbed. The uncle understood and had the boy admitted into the Hare School. The school was then housed in Bhawanicharan Dutt Street, south of the present Overtoun Hall. Gooroodass, first admitted into the 8th class, made his way rapidly from the 8th to the 5th at one spurt, and then from the 5th to the 3rd at the next. From the 5th class onwards he always occupied the 1st place in his examinations.

A few details have come down to us of his school life. He learnt *Amarakosh* by heart and read books like *Charupath* and *Kadambari*. (He had not read a single novel in English or Bengali before quitting College, and it was only when he had passed out and been installed in Berhampore College as professor of law that he read *Durgeshnandini* and *Ivanhoe*, which had then presumably picked up some dust through controversy.) It is curious, however, to know that Gooroodass was rather slow at first in learning geometry, and it was only by the skilful help of one of his teachers, Guish-chandia Dev, that he mastered it. Another of his teachers, Nilmani Chakravarti, was a stickler for discipline, and his insistence on accuracy in details and in map-drawing had a good effect on the young student. But the most helpful influence came from the Headmaster, Pearychurn Sircar, the well-known author of the different 'books of reading' which had been taught in our schools for many years. His kind heart had left its impression on the boy, an impression which he cherished faithfully in life. When

Gooroodass fell ill just before his Entrance Examination, it was his Headmaster who came forward to offer the *palki* hire—then the only available conveyance—from his house to the Town Hall, the place where the examination was held, and insisted on paying it out of his own pocket. It was the same Pearychurn again who made the students write something every day and thus follow the precept implied in Bacon's famous *dictum*. "Writing makes an exact man." These class exercises were duly entered in a register and taken into account at the end of the year in adjudging merit and awarding rewards and scholarships. He trusted the boys completely, and they on their part tried to justify that trust by keeping the standard of honesty always before them. Pearychurn Sircar was actively interested in the boys' welfare and he hoped to be really helpful to them, and Gooroodass considered himself lucky in having such an affectionate teacher, one who was a rigorous taskmaster at the same time. Pearychurn himself eschewed the comforts of a leisured life, and always walked on foot from his house to his school. Besides his school subjects he was proficient in medicine and science. It was very fortunate for Gooroodass that he came into contact, during his school life, with such a character, and we may be sure the experience was fruitful to him in many ways.

It was in 1860 that he passed the Entrance Examination; the examination was held in December, 1859. He stood first among the Hare School boys and for further studies entered the Presidency College, then housed to the northern side of the College Square tank—partly on the Sanskrit College and Hindu School grounds and partly on the Albert Hall side. The University studies had not yet been regularly formulated, there had been as yet no First Arts Examination arranged by the University; by the middle of the year the examination was started and Gooroodass began to study for the F.A. Examination, giving up the Senior Scholarship Course. Even Trailokyanath Maitra, who was a brilliant student of his year, and a senior student, appeared in the F.A. Examination in the same year with him because otherwise he would not be admitted to the B.A. Examination.

There was no science course for the F.A. then, and no textbooks on science were taught. Keightley's *History of England* was the text for history; for English, Bacon's *Advancement of*

Learning (1st half), Addison's *Spectator*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, etc., Todhunter's *Algebra*, Todhunter's *Trigonometry*, Potts' *Euclid*, Potter's *Statistics for Mathematics*, Abercrombie's *Mental and Moral Science for Philosophy*. Sanskrit was not compulsory, but Bengali was, and Kasiram Das *Mahabharat* was included in the course.

Rangalal, the Bengali poet, taught Bengali for a brief period in the 1st-year class. Gooroodass learnt from him a few hints on translation from English to Bengali. Cowell taught History and *Macbeth* too for a short while. Pearychurn Sircar, the Headmaster of the Hindu School, already referred to, joined the Presidency College as a Professor of English while Gooroodass was reading in the 2nd-year class. Among other notable teachers were Saunders for History, Rees and Sutcliffe for Mathematics.

Gooroodass stood 1st in the F A Examination in 1862. Science was then included in the curriculum for B A course, but topics like Physiology, Chemistry and Zoology were taught in the Medical College classes which Presidency College students attended. Krishnakamal Bhattacharyya taught Bengali to the 3rd-year and 4th-year classes, he read *Meghnadbadh* with his voice choked with passion, occasionally quoting parallel passages from English and Sanskrit poets. Gooroodass declared that for his knowledge of grammar he owed a good deal to him. Lobb, the positivist, taught English. So did Grapel, a 'Barister-at-Law', who later on became the Registrar of the Calcutta University. Jones, who learnt his philosophy from the great philosopher Sir William Hamilton, also taught them. Gooroodass stood 1st in the B A Examination in 1864. He stood 1st also in three subjects—Mathematics, Philosophy and Bengali.

Immediately after the results were announced, Gooroodass worked for one month in the Presidency College as an assistant teacher of Mathematics, on a monthly salary of Rs 150. He had to lecture 2 hours per day and had for his pupils the distinguished Bengali poet Nabinchandra Sen, and Krishnabihari Sen. He had to teach also Byron's poem, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, during his brief tenure.

He then prepared for the M A Examination in Mathematics and received lessons in the Presidency College from Sutcliffe who taught Calculus and Analytical Geometry, while the other topics

were taught by Rees and Stevenson. He sat for his examination in 1865 and occupied the first place among the successful students of the year, winning the gold medal. Before this year it had been the rule that aspirants after rewards and medals must appear at the M A Examination within one month of their B A, instead of completing their course within the customary period of one year, but this unhappy rule had been just removed, and he was spared the strain.

He was appointed to teach Mathematics for a very short term in the Presidency College, for the 2nd time, in 1865. His students in the 1st-year class included future civilians like Romesh Chandra Dutt, Biharilal Gupta, Anandaram Barooah. He interspersed his lectures in Mathematics with interesting illustrations and recitations from verses suitable to the topic. It was his practice to set 6 sums every day for the students for home work, the sums were graded. On two consecutive days Romesh Dutt failed to produce his task, and Gooroodass asked him why. Ramesh Babu stammered out that he was not proficient in Mathematics, at which the teacher retorted that to learn Mathematics up to the F A standard one did not require the genius of Newton or Laplace, and to read literature up to the same standard one had not to be a Shakespeare or Milton. What was required was after all a little industry. This mild rebuke drew tears from the young boy's eyes and he tried to work for his Mathematics to the best of his abilities. This attitude of the young student, the way in which he received the teachers' rebuke, was a memory dearly treasured up by Gooroodass ever afterwards.

Within a few months of his having quitted his temporary appointment in the Presidency College, he was appointed Professor of Mathematics in the then General Assembly's Institution and worked there in that rôle from January to May, 1866. It was strenuous work, because the College could keep only one teacher of Mathematics, one who had thus to do the work for two. When Gooroodass left, the vacancy was filled up by Prof. Gaurishanker De who occupied the chair for a little more than 40 years.

Gooroodass had completed his lectures in law when studying for B A, according to custom. He decided to appear in the B.L. Examination in 1866. Before the examination he began to keep

late hours at night, and to read for his examination with the help of a light placed inside the mosquito curtain. But to guard against a possible risk of catching fire, his mother ruled that the light must be kept outside. She was rather nervous about it and would now and then warn him against the possibility of falling ill on account of the severe strain. His competitor for the gold medal for standing first in the examination was his colleague in the college, Nilambar Mookerji, and somebody humorously advised him to see that he did not miss the medal. At this suggestion she flared up and asked him, "What do you want? Do you want all the good things of the world? So much greed cannot be good. If you fall ill, what about your strain and gold medal and your examination? I tell you frankly, if Nilambar gets the medal this time, I shall be happy. Why should he not get it once? Do your duty with a clear conscience—do not seek to compete in a spirit of jealousy or rivalry—God will make suitable return." The words of Sonamani produced as usual a satisfactory result, Gooroodass ceased to keep up at night, but all the same, he gained the gold medal. On this as on all other occasions the advice of the mother proved beneficial for the son and opened his eyes to the better ways of life.

In 1866 Gooroodass secured an appointment at Berhampore College, after some opposition from his mother who was eventually persuaded to give her consent. There was a vacancy due to the death of the then incumbent, and only when she was told that Gooroodass's appointment would mean no distress to the relatives of the deceased and that the household deity would suffer from no negligence or lack of attention that she agreed to the proposal. Gooroodass was a successful teacher of Law, his hours were between 9 and 10 in the morning. Stephen's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* was a prescribed text, it was a costly book, and he dictated a summary to the class which greatly relieved the poorer students. C. H. Campbell, then the Commissioner of Murshidabad division, accompanied by his friend Rev. Long, the translator of *Nil Durpan*, once attended his lecture, his admiration for the successful teacher is contained in the official records. In the courts, Gooroodass was in good hands. Matilal Bandyopadhyay, a senior pleader, treated him generously, and when the junior pleader had on one occasion looked up a precedent in Muhammadan Law, which was then

unknown to Matilal, the senior lawyer remarked : “ It is your discovery, therefore you must argue the case.” Apart from such ennobling contacts, he cultivated the genial society of brilliant writers and thinkers, including Bankimchandra and Rashbihari who were then both at Berhampore. It was here that he wrote his *Abused India Vindicated* and read it to the Grant Hall Club. In 1868 he came to Calcutta for 2 weeks to appear at the P R S Examination ; he had formidable rivals, Kalicharan Banerji who fell ill during the examination and could not sit to the last, and Asutosh Mookerjee who got the studentship. Gooroodass resolved never to study again for examination purpose and in a spirit of competition.

In 1872 Gooroodass, unable any more to resist his mother's pressure, returned to Calcutta and joined the High Court. In 1877 he took his degree of Doctor of Laws, and in 1878, just one year later, was appointed Tagore Law Lecturer on the Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhana. His lectures passed through more than one edition and the contents were fairly equally divided between ‘ marriage ’ and ‘ stridhana ’. These lectures were not only mentioned on all subsequent occasions by the High Court and the Privy Council as an authoritative treatise on Hindu Law, but also referred to in the same strain in the Encyclopaedia Britannica by Sir W. Markby in his article on Hindu Law. In 1879 he was appointed Fellow of the Calcutta University and in 1887 he was nominated a member of the Bengal Legislative Council. On April 9, 1886, he attended a meeting of the Bengal National League which had been formed on 5th March, 1886, to promote by all constitutional means the introduction of a representative element into the Government of the country, “ in view of the serious political disabilities under which the entire population of this country now labours, and the apparent hopelessness of obtaining the removal of these or the redress of the numerous grievances under which the population suffers ”. In 1888 he was selected for appointment on the Bench, by virtue of his abilities no less than the sterling honesty of character, on the recommendation of the then Chief Justice Sir Comer Petheran. In spite of his watchfulness to the duties and responsibilities of the new situation, he retained his interest in student life and in the cause of education so much so that he was appointed Vice-Chancellor

of the University on 2nd January, 1890, an office thrust upon him by the retirement of the then incumbent, the Chief Justice. He was the first graduate of the University to hold this position and the appointment itself was a tribute to the University of Calcutta. As a matter of fact, appointing an Indian Vice-Chancellor to an Indian University itself was an experiment, and that this first experiment would prove successful was a foregone conclusion in his case, because Gooroodass had been helping for sometime Sir Comer, his Chief, in his duties as Vice-Chancellor. His appointment was thus somewhat of a national vindication, and was acclaimed as such by the papers of the day.

As a Vice-Chancellor he had time to address the graduates of the University on three occasions, and his characteristic tone appears in all. Even now his advice and suggestions have their value. His advice to them was to this effect: "Be thorough, be restrained, be contented with your position in life, cheerfully bearing its reverses, and turn your education to useful account." On the second occasion he exhorted the graduates to increase the stock of the world's knowledge, to guide progressive thought so as to enrich the world, and be fully aware of the limitation of their power. In these addresses he criticised the omission of moral education in the University curricula. The well-known and easily recognised truths of morality should be set forth and the teacher should use as little force and exercise as little fear as possible, and he juridically analysed the reasons of cramming. If the syllabus itself is heavy, examination papers are inordinately long and questions are disproportionately difficult, or if a premium is put on memory alone, cramming is in a manner forced on the student. The use of English as the medium of instruction and examination, he saw clearly, added to the difficulty. "The standard of an examination is really raised not so much by requiring a more extensive but superficial reading as by insisting on a deeper culture and a more thorough appreciation of what is read. Knowledge forced into the mind under high pressure only inflates the mind with conceit, without producing any healthy expansion of ideas, it strains and enervates instead of exercising and invigorating the mental powers." The warning is still much needed. It is remarkable that in these days,

the last decade of the 19th century, Gooroodass, while not minimising the effect of liberal education, fully and clearly realised that for the material prosperity of the country it was necessary to have technical education, to institute alternative courses for the Entrance Examination in which there might be provision for giving practical education, or conferring marks of distinction on deserving persons educated in such institutions.

There is a draft in his own hand, dated 11th March, 1901, in reply to an invitation asking him to join in a memorial to be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta over some measures of reform regarding examinations. More specifically, the memorial complained that the mere passing of examinations had become the end and aim of education, and that examinations were so organised as to set an actual premium upon the worst possible forms of cramming. For this the "unprofessional and non-expert character of the Governing Body of the University" was to blame, and the constitution of the University had to be amended. The evils were no doubt there, but would the suggested remedy serve any purpose? Only the few pursue knowledge under difficulties; for the rest of mankind such a pursuit is possible only under favourable environments. It is but natural that our students should set a premium on their pass. Justice Banerjee thought that there were only two ways of remedying the evil—(1) establishment of fellowships which might be granted to well-qualified graduates on suitable conditions, as may leave them time to pursue knowledge for its own sake, and (2) the improvement of the teaching staff of our schools and colleges by the appointment of men of the highest attainments who by their example as well as their precept could inspire their pupils with an enthusiastic love of knowledge. Funds had to be raised on that issue. He thought changes of the constitution contemplated in the memorial would lead nowhere, nor was it necessary in his opinion, because the Senate would not spoil any measure of purely educational reform nor would the Syndicate be stony hard against the introduction of a larger representation of educational experts. The draft ends with an observation worth reproducing here. "Before concluding I wish to say a word about a point which is sometimes lost sight of. Without seeking for one moment to justify any undue admixture of the ne

element in the government of a University, I think it but fair to point out that whilst the work of teaching should be entrusted exclusively to experts, the work of directing and testing the teaching of a vast province with its diversity of interests can be well performed only by an agency which combines the depth of erudition of the specialist with the breadth of view of the general scholar and experienced man of the world."

His work in the Indian Universities Commission in 1902 was not inconsiderable. Ramananda Chatterjee, then Principal, Kayastha Pathshala, Allahabad, remembered how he was watchful and active during the Commission's visit to that institution, and looked into the daily working and even studied the notes, correcting errors and suggesting improvement, while the other members of the Commission might have felt bored. The recommendations of the Commission were important in various aspects, among other things, it recommended a whole-time Registrar for the first time, the registration of graduates, re-forming the Senate and Syndicate, and defining the status of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal as the Rector and that of the Director of Public Instruction as the Vice-Chairman of the Syndicate in relation to the Calcutta University. To the Report Sir Gooroodass added a note of Dissent. It stands out as an important document even today; he stood for the independence of the Fellows of the University, and recommended that all Fellows should hold office for life, he stood for a just and equitable constitution of the Senate where the educationists as well as the spokesmen on behalf of the Government and the public should be, so far as possible, equally represented, no bar being placed against Indians on the ground that the University was a western institution in its origin and Indians would not understand its working. He stood up also against the principle adopted by the Commission, of excluding students from University education by a fee limit, and of putting difficulties in the way of students getting free transfers except when such transfer was detrimental to discipline. His points of difference have been summarised in the concluding paragraph of his note where he has shown how he has viewed education from an angle different from that of his colleagues. "My learned colleagues have aimed exclusively at raising the standard of University education and

college discipline, and some of the measures of reform they have advocated for the attainment of that exclusive object, naturally enough, tend to place education under the control of Government and small bodies of experts and to reduce the control of what is known as the popular element, to repress imperfectly equipped colleges and schools, to deter students of average ability and humble means from the pursuit of knowledge and, in short, to sacrifice surface in order to secure height. While yielding to none in my appreciation of the necessity for raising the standard of education and discipline, I have ventured to think that the solution arrived at is only a partial solution of the problem, and that we should aim not only at raising the height, but also at broadening the base of our educational fabric."

Gooroodass's appointment to the Commission was not an unimportant occurrence. It came in for special mention in a spirit of congratulation in Surendranath Banerjee's Presidential speech at the open session of the Indian National Congress at Ahmedabad in 1902 and, when the note of dissent was published along with the Report, Gooroodass was strongly supported on press and platform by able writers and speakers. The *Indian Mirror* observed: "Dr Banerjee is a man of the people, has risen from the ranks, education and character have made him what he is, he has no personal likes or dislikes, he has no iron of his own to grind in this particular matter, he has ever shrunk from any attempt to give offence to anybody, he holds singularly moderate views. The publicly expressed views of such a man, then, are of the greatest weight and value, and entitled to the closest and most respectful consideration. . . the note of Dissent, written by Mr Justice Banerjee, is entitled to greater attention than the Report of the Commission." At an immense gathering in the Town Hall, Calcutta, Devaprasad Sarvadhicary, rising to move a resolution supporting the note of Dissent, paid a high tribute and declared that if the report and Dissent could by any chance be laid before an unbiased jury of English educational experts, Mr Justice Banerjee's Dissent would receive much more vigorous support than could be expected here.

The dissent was a masterly and powerful presentment and enunciation of the popular, and therefore the right, view of the problems at issue and its author had earned sincere and lasting gratitude. ~

About a year and half after this, Mr Justice Banerjee decided to retire from the High Court. His decision was not due to any grounds of ill-health, but from a feeling that he had been there long enough. He tendered his resignation, he said, because having served as a Judge for fifteen years, he thought it was high time for him to leave so that some one else might come and take his place. This was a memorable step in his life, something like the *bānaprastha* of the Hindus—a voluntary withdrawal from the material affairs of life—and one of the newspapers of the day thus commented on the occasion. “It is not ill health or age or compulsion that has led to Mr Banerjee’s retirement from the High Court. It is the consciousness of the feeling that he must devote his last years to his country’s good untrammelled by the shackles of office that has made this grand Hindu gentleman a man of freedom”¹

In June of the same year, 1904, he was knighted, congratulations poured in from all sections, His Excellency the Viceroy being among the first. He received them politely, and is reported to have said to the writer of his biography in Bengali, “what gladness should I feel at this knighthood, the title of *Sir* or *Chhar* (of no consequence)? This I count my good luck, if my countrymen rejoice at it. I feel this title is a matter of no consequence—*chhar bastu*”²

From this time on he was busy thinking and writing and helping to organise education. It was a matter of absorbing interest for him, not merely a good scholar, but also thoroughly honest in whatever business he undertook in life, he had, as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta and on account of his connection with educational institutions, developed what was his original interest into something like a system. We find this in the various tracts and books written by him on the subject which require careful perusal by our educationists. It will be found that he has still something to offer us.

The *Siksha* was written in 1907. Education had been one of the main objects of his study. It is divided into six chapters which cover the outlines of the discussion: the aim of education,

¹ *The Indian Mirror*, dated the 4th February, 1904

² The Bengali word *chhar* means ‘of no consequence’ and comes very near in corrupt Bengali pronunciation to ‘Sir’

the nature of the learner, the signs of the teacher, curriculum, materials and method—all in the course of 59 pages

Jnan O Karma was penned in 1910. Only one chapter, the 6th, in Part I is directly concerned with education. It is a philosophical book and examines, though briefly, the nature of knowledge that we may have and the springs of action in the various fields. Acharyya Krishnakamal Bhattacharyya declared that the book *Jnan O Karma* would occupy for the present the first and foremost place in the Bengali language, as it contained profound thoughts well expressed, and nothing like it had been written before in the language. Professor P. K. Ray, an erudite scholar in logic and philosophy, declared it would occupy the same position in Bengali as Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* did in English. Immediate appreciation came also from Rabindranath Tagore and Hirendranath Datta.

Towards the end of the book the writer discusses the reform measures which people want to introduce to Hindu Society. He is against animal sacrifice, against any legal measure prohibiting early marriage, say from 13 for women up to 18, specially for women, which is after all a matter for social practice, against remarriage for widows who can live up to the high ideals of Hindu widowhood. The book ends with an exhortation to strive after the ideal of selflessness in life's ways. Religious education, being the education both in this world and the next, is more comprehensive and therefore superior to other kinds of education.

A Few Thoughts on Education (pp. 343+xx) was written in 1904. It purported to be a few suggestions relating to educational reform (comprehensive in its scope—physical, intellectual, moral and religious) according to the different periods in life, infancy (the first five years), boyhood (from the 6th to the 15th year) and youth, followed by general observations on professional, technical and national education. It may be observed in passing that he thought of Geometry as a subject to be included in the course of studies even of infants who might be conveniently taught the notions of space—e.g., “infant Arithmetic may be followed by infant Geometry by the notions of *up* and *down*, *before* and *behind*, *right* and *left*, of *straight line* and *curve*, of simple figures, such as *square* and *circle*, and of simple solids, such as *cube* and *sphere*, being

gradually called forth by suitable illustrations." (p 12, 2nd edition)

The Education Problem in India was published in 1914. The immediate purpose was to offer suggestions on educational reform which was then engaging the attention of the Government and the public. It does not repeat the ideas adumbrated in 1901, but is, from the very nature of the occasion, more concerned with practical measures in connection with education.

In the early years of the Benares Hindu University when a Hindu University Society was formed to promote the opening of the University, Sir Gooroodass Banerjee's help was considerable in guidance and advice in such matters as the regulations, etc.

His active interest in the students' exercises and the 'Poets' Meet' in the Eden Hindu Hostel both in 1890 when it first started and in 1908 when it had to be resuscitated was gratefully acknowledged by the student residents of the hostel. He himself carefully examined the poetic efforts and helped to adjudge the prize.

He was actively associated with the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad since its inception in 1894 and was the member of a Sub-Committee of five (Rabindranath was another) to recommend and initiate steps for introducing Bengali into the University curriculum. Gooroodass collected representative public opinion and the Sub-Committee proposed to the Syndicate of the Calcutta University that an essay in Bengali might be set along with the paper in Sanskrit for the F.A. and B.A. Examinations, which the University accepted but with the proviso that it would be simply an optional paper, and the marks would not naturally be added up in estimating the results. The records of the Parishad show that Gooroodass was also actively associated with its Paribhasa Committee for preparing technical terms for use in Geography.

The partition of Bengal seems to have thrown him out of his usual aloofness from all talks of politics and political activity. He came forward to denounce it in no uncertain terms. With regard to taking part in politics he later on in 1917 had thus stated his position. "Though I was a member of several Political Associations when practising as a Vakil in the High Court, I gave up all connection with politics since I accepted office as a Judge of that Court; and though I have retired from that office since 1904, as I

have retired on pension I have tried hard to observe the same judicial aloofness from politics as I did when in office I no doubt take a keen interest in the political advancement of my country, but it is the interest of a citizen and not that of a political reformer." On the exceptional occasion noted above, when the foundation stone of the Federation Hall was laid on 16th October, 1905, the date on which the partition of Bengal took effect, and to commemorate the unity which the partition no doubt wanted to break, it was Sir Gooroodass who proposed Anandamohan Bose to the chair in an eloquent speech in Bengali and in doing so, strongly condemned the partition. Sir Surendranath, in his autobiography, thus observed "The appearance of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee on the platform of a political meeting and in the rôle of a speaker was a fact so significant that it should have opened the eyes of the authorities to the deep feeling that lay behind the anti-partition movement A judge has no politics According to Sir Gooroodass, an ex-judge should have none We may or may not accept this view Some of the most distinguished of Indian judges have been of a different opinion and after their retirement from the Bench have not hesitated to take their share in the political movements of the day, but that was not Sir Gooroodass' opinion; and he stuck to it, with that quiet determination which pre-eminently distinguished the man On this occasion he was possibly overborne by the all-pervading influence of an irresistible public feeling, which swept over our hearts and our homes, and captured the minds of young and old, rich and poor, men and women alike" (*A Nation in Making*, p 815)

But if he was opposed on principle to an ex-judge taking part in politics, he threw himself heart and soul into the business of the National Council of Education and helped to steer it clear of all extraneous considerations towards an educational goal

When the National Council of Education was about to be started and Hirendranath Datta and other enthusiasts met in College Square to hold a public meeting for the purpose, it was Sir Gooroodass who sought Hirendranath out, and while fully agreeing that a national system of education was the need of the hour, he at the same time claimed that the new scheme should be kept above all political programmes and it should not owe its existence to any desire to

oppose the system of education then in existence. Hirendranath and his associates yielded to him in this matter, and when next they wanted him to take a hand in the organization, Sir Gooroodass did so. He was associated with it from the first meeting of the Education Conference held in November, 1905, and though he himself declined the honour of the Presidentship of the National Council of Education, which was at his request filled up by Sir Rashbehary Ghose, he devoted considerable time to make it work smoothly and on useful lines. At the inaugural meeting of the Council on 15th August, 1906, held at the Town Hall under the presidency of Sir Rashbehary Ghose, it was he who spoke on the aims and plan of work. In that speech we can easily infer how much of the ideal, as stated there, was derived from his own ideas on education. "While feeling convinced that there are defects in the existing system of education and seeking to avoid them, we do not ignore the benefits received from it, and the education to be imparted by the National Council of Education is intended to stand apart from, but not in opposition to, the existing system." No unhealthy competition, no antagonism to other institutions was allowed to govern the policy of the new organization. The medium of instruction would be the mother tongue; Bengali and Urdu were to be selected from the many vernaculars, and this would lighten the burden of the young student and prevent wastage of time to the extent of 2 years. We cannot expect, he said, any revival of learning here until education is imparted not merely in its primary stage, but in the higher stages as well, through the medium of the vernaculars. Even in these early years of the century and in drafting that statement he foresaw the need of training our teachers, and his remarks may well be quoted here. "One great drawback in the progress of education is the want of competent trained teachers. It is not every one who knows a subject that can teach it properly. Knowledge of the subject to be taught is no doubt a necessary qualification in a teacher, but it is not a sufficient qualification. A teacher must possess many other qualifications of a high order, intellectual as well as moral. And the training of a body of competent teachers must be a necessary preliminary to the work of education. Teaching is an art and a difficult art, and the art is based upon recondite principles of the science of

mind Every teacher must learn his art and know at least as much of mental science as concerns his art And if the trained school-master is abroad the spread of education will receive a powerful impetus " If we try to form an idea of Sir Gooroodass the educationist, we should remember these words. Such trained teachers would also open up a new vocational avenue, an avenue which was just then looming on the horizon. His educational views were comprehensive, liberal and practical, and he did not grudge any efforts in the cause of the National Council of Education It was largely on his account that Sir Rashbehary Ghose, after seeing the working of the Council for a few years, helped it with a magnificent donation.

A few years before the closing of his earthly career Sir Gooroodass had yet to play some remarkable part in the public life of the country. We may mention the fact of his moving a resolution on the 5th July, 1913, at a meeting of the Senate of the Calcutta University, protesting against the action of His Excellency the Governor-General-in-Council in refusing to sanction the appointment of 3 lecturers because, it was held, it was not " desirable to appoint as University lecturers men who have recently taken a prominent part in political movements " This action or, properly speaking, interference, meant a new policy, and the gentlemen concerned were ' Mr. Rasul, Dr Abdulla Suhrawardy and Mr K.³P. Jayswal ' Dr Rashbehary Ghose had moved a resolution to record that the interference was not warranted, the Governor-General-in-Council having had no jurisdiction in the matter The resolution was carried by an overwhelming majority, only eight members voting against it. A paragraph from Sir Gooroodass will be worth quoting here because it involves an important educational principle

" With all my predilection as an old retired orthodox Brahmin for the purely contemplative life of the hermit I cannot endorse the view that we should train our young men to be pure contemplative creatures fit only for the forest. We want to train them to be active men and useful citizens, qualified to take part in the world of action outside the University walls. Then again that will be an inane purity of atmosphere which has to be secured by sedulously shutting out learned men who have taken an active and honourable part in wholesome movements for furthering progress. An atmosphere so purified will have nothing invigorating,

nothing stimulating, nothing inspiring in it, and may harbour, as all stagnant things are apt to do, germs of mischief”

The passage recalls to our mind Milton’s memorable utterance against “cloistered virtue” and should correct the impression formed in the minds of some “progressive” people according to whom Sir Gooroodass, or anybody else who spoke on the excellence of restriction or control, must be dubbed as going counter to progress. “Should students or teachers take part in politics?” found here a well-considered reply in which the nobility of his mind was not warped by any mistaken idea of unnecessary and sweeping general prohibition.

He gave evidence before the Sadler Commission (1917-18), both written and oral, and his observations, covering a wide field, are still worth perusal. They are always practical and at the same time governed by liberal principles. Four of them may well be considered here. First, regarding the teaching of English. he was strongly opposed to the study of literature without grammar, or the study of the language apart from that of the literature, and also disapproved of too many books. He recalled the prose and poetical readers compiled under the supervision of Bethune and published by the School Book Society as an excellent graduated series, and recommended the study of such portions of English literature as are of cosmopolitan interest. English Grammar, he held, should be regularly taught, and not left to be picked up from merely copious reading. “The encouraging of a wrong method of teaching English up to the Matriculation stage, that is, the method which seeks to make boys learn English by copious, and therefore necessarily superficial, reading of a large number of books,” in preference to the method of thorough and careful reading of a few selected text-books on literature, with a text-book on grammar, this he condemned as a great defect, and he observed Copious rapid reading may help to make one a ready writer and speaker in his vernacular, but not in a difficult foreign language, which can be learnt correctly only by close and thorough reading of a few well-chosen books and a text-book on grammar at the early stages of the student’s progress. Secondly, he was for abolishing altogether, or substantially reducing, the percentage of compulsory attendance for students at their collegiate lectures. Thirdly,

again and again he pleaded that the Hindu system of medicine should be taught in our medical colleges and recognised by the University. "The Hindu system of medicine, with all its errors in its theories, is a valuable depository of remedial agents which have effected cures and stood the test of time for centuries. And such a system is well worthy of study." Again, "though according to some it is wrong as a system, it being based upon unproved theories, yet it has discovered remedies which have been effecting cures, and have stood the test of experience for centuries, and the active principles and modes of action of those remedies require investigation according to modern scientific methods, and the study of that system should be encouraged in the University." Fourthly, he had by this time lost some of his faith in the "trained teacher", obviously so, because the training given was not good. "The trained teacher is apt to become mechanical, intelligence and natural love of teaching are of greater importance than training. Improvements should be made in the methods of training teachers so that they should not become mechanical."

The taper of his life was fast going out. He had kept himself busy to the end, though he had retired from the Bench and the Bar long ago. His evidence before the Commission just now referred to shows that his intellect remained active and alert; he agreed to be the Dean of the Faculty of Law in the Calcutta University and, as usual with him, worked at it with devotion. He set a paper for the M L Examination. In October, 1918, he was attacked with dysentery, a disease from which he began to suffer now and then. His health deteriorated and he insisted on making a will. Ten days before the end came he was, according to his earnest desire, brought down to his Baghbazar house on the side of the Ganges, and there, after feeling relieved at the gentle breeze of the sacred river and mostly living upon its water, immersed in holy thoughts, he spent the last few days of his life. He enjoined that on the day of his *Sradh* a particular branch of the *bel* tree in the garden adjoining his house was to be used for the *brishakashtha*, the flower garden was not to be spoilt in any way in making arrangements for welcoming the guests, etc. He wished also that at the time of his death only a few relatives and his spiritual adviser might be allowed to stay in the room and that there should be no crowd

of mourners in their cars following the dead body on to the bank of the Ganges, to show respect to the dead according to the modern custom. In particular, he wanted that Pandit Krishnakamal Bhattacharyya who had been once his teacher might on the *Śrādh* day read out the *Nachiketa Upakhyan* from the *Katha Upanishad*. About 10 hours before his death a letter from the Syndicate conveying their concern and also a message of hope for his eventual recovery was read out to him and he at once dictated a suitable reply to the bearer of the letter, Dr Sureshprasad Saibadhikari, who had been deputed by the Syndicate for the purpose, and he also signed the cheque depositing for the last time the amount of his monthly pension at his bank. He expired on 2nd December, 1918.

He died in harness. A life devoted to a high ideal, the worship of God and the service of his fellow-beings, a true humility of spirit combined with a rare independence of mind, mindful of details but never missing the whole, Sir Gooroodass was a beacon light to his countrymen, specially to the Hindus. The nearness to the Ganges, the recitals from the *Gita*, the company of friends and relatives as the flame of his life was going out, the consciousness of life which remained with him till the very end, and using up every moment of that consciousness in thoughts of duty and of the higher self—all these had made his death truly remarkable, but let us remember, not more remarkable than his life. It was the life of a Hindu who imbibed the best traditions of an ancient race and preserved them in his conduct, it was the life of a Brahmin to whom sobriety and restraint were not colourless words, but whose actions and thoughts were all disciplined by them, it was, above all, a life dedicated to the service of his fellow-beings, service rendered no less by the living example of his own life than through thoughts and writings on education. May his countrymen be worthy of it, and may they remember him, and in that remembrance endeavour to justify their claims on the service rendered by the illustrious dead!

স্মার গুৰুদাসের জীবনের কয়েকটি কাহিনী

শ্রীগোবীন্দ্রমোহন মিত্র

১। বাল্যকালে গুৰুদাস শ্যামপুকুৰে তাঁহাৰ মাতুলালয়ে ছিলেন। একজন গুৰুদাসৰ কতিপয় বালককে শিক্ষা দিতেন। গুৰুদাস ‘ক’ লিখিবৰ চেষ্টা কৰিয়া উক্ত বৰ্ণৰ উৰ্ব বেখাটি সোজা কৰিয়া তুলিতে পাবিতেছিলেন না, উহা ডান দিকে হেলিয়া যাইতেছিল। গুৰুদাস দুই দিন চেষ্টা কৰিয়া কৃতব্যৰ্থ না হওযায়, তাঁহাৰ জননী সোণামণি দেবী দৃঢ়তায় সহিত গুৰুদাসকে বলিলেন, “ যদি কল্য আমাৰ পুত্ৰকে ঠিক কৰিয়া ‘ব’ লেখাইতে না পাবেন, আপোনাকেও ছাডিব না এবং পুত্ৰকেও কিছু খাইতে দিব না। ” পৰদিন বেলা প্ৰায় বাৰটোৰ সময়ে গুৰুদাস ঠিক কৰিয়া ‘ক’ লিখিতে পাবিলে, গুৰুদাসৰ ছুটি পাইলেন এবং গুৰুদাস খাইতে পাইলেন। তিনি বলিতেন যে, তাঁহাৰ মাতৃদেবীৰ উক্ত দৃঢ় প্ৰতিজ্ঞাই তাঁহাৰ উত্তৰকালৰ অধ্যবসায় ও কৰ্তব্য-নিষ্ঠাৰ মূল।

২। যখন তিনি Oriental Seminaryতে পড়িতেন, তখন একদিন তিনি কতকগুলি চিনেৰ মাটিৰ পুতুলেৰ দ্বাৰা বাটীৰ সংলগ্ন বাগানেৰ পথেৰ এক পাৰ্শ্ব বৃত্ত (Circle), সমদ্বিবাহু ত্ৰিভুজ, সমবাহু ত্ৰিভুজ প্ৰভৃতি কয়েকটি জ্যামিতিৰ চিত্ৰ অতি সুন্দৰৰূপে নিৰ্মাণ কৰিয়াছিল। তাঁহাৰ মেজ মাসীনা যখন কুল-দেবতা শ্ৰীৰঘুনাথদেবেৰ ভোগ আনিতেছিল, তখন তাঁহাৰ পা লাগিয়া দুই-তিনিটি চিত্ৰ ভাঙিয়া গিয়াছিল। ইহাতে গুৰুদাস ক্ৰুদ্ধ হইয়া তাঁহাৰ পাত্ৰেৰ দিবে চিল ছোঁভাতে পা হইতে বৰপাত হইয়াছিল। সোণামণি দেবী এই ঘটনাৰ সংবাদ পাইয়া, একটি ঘৰে বাইয়া অতিশয় কাতৰভাবে ভগবান্কে ডাবিতে লাগিলেন। বেলা প্ৰায় বাৰটোৰ সময়ে গুৰুদাস ঐ ঘৰে আসিয়া জননীকে বলিলেন, “ না, তুমি একপ বিষণ্ণমনে বসিয়া বহিয়াছ কেন, আনাকে ভাত দিবে না ? ” জননী বলিলেন, “ আজ তুমি কিপ অন্যায় কৰ্ম কৰিয়াছ, তাহা একবাৰ ভাবিয়া দেখিতেছ না ? চিলাটি তোমাৰ মেজ মাসীমাৰ মাথায় কিংবা চোখে লাগিলে কিপ অনিষ্ট হইত বল দেখি। তুমি যদি একপ দুৰত্ত হও, তাহা হইলে আনিও খাইব না এবং তোমাকেও ভাত দিতে পাৰিব না। ” এই কথা শুনিয়া গুৰুদাস বলিলেন, “ না, তোমাৰ নিকট প্ৰতিজ্ঞা কৰিতেছি—আব কখনও কোনওকপ অন্যায় কৰ্ম কৰিব না। ”

তখন জননী বলিলেন, “ শ্ৰীৰঘুনাথদেবেকে প্ৰণাম কৰিয়া ভক্তিভাবে প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰ, যেন ক্ৰোধ কিংবা লোভেৰ বশীভূত হইয়া কোনও অন্যায় কৰ্ম না কৰ—এবং তোমাৰ মেজ মাসীমাকে প্ৰণাম কৰিয়া তাঁহাৰ নিকট ক্ষমা প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিয়া আইস। ” আদৰ্শ জননীৰ পুত্ৰকে শিক্ষা দিবাব এই প্ৰণালী আমাদেৰ সকলেৰ প্ৰণিধানযোগ্য।

৩। গুৰুদাস যখন M.A পৰীক্ষা দিতেছিল, একদিন কিয়ৎকালেৰ জন্য পৰীক্ষা-গৃহেৰ বাহিৰে যাইবাব নিমিত্ত অব্যাপক সপ্তৰ্শ সাহেবেৰ অনুমতি প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিয়াছিল। সাহেব বলিলেন, “ বাহিৰে যাওয়া নিয়ম-বিকল্প। ” তখন গুৰুদাস বিখ্যাত বৰি পোপেৰ এই শ্লোকটি আবৃত্তি কৰিলেন,

“ If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end),
Some lucky license answer to the full
The intent proposed, that license is a rule.”

গুৰ্গাঁও গাৱঁস বেনদাসেন প্ৰত্যক্ষপ্ৰমাণিত এটা যুক্তিযুক্ত উদ্দেশ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠা হইয়া তৎকালীন বাহিনীৰ বাহিত অনুমতি দিলেন।

৪। বেনদাস নি এন্ প্ৰদাশান এন্ প্ৰাৰ্থিত হোৱাৰ ফলত এটি নাজিৰা প্ৰতিষ্ঠান। সোনাগি দেৱী এৰদিন তাহাৰে বনিতেন। 'এত এৰিগ নাজিৰা প্ৰতিষ্ঠান, তেনাৰ শৰীৰ হুইচ হইবান সম্ভাৱনা এন্ হুইচ তুনি পৰীক্ষা দিত্তে পাৰিগৈ না।' বেনদাস উত্তৰ দিলেন, 'না, এই পৰীক্ষাৰ ফলত এলি নিগম আগত বৰ্জিত হ'ব নোৱাৰে বৰ্জিত হ'ব।' বেনদাস তাহাৰ এও দূৰ সম্পৰ্কৰ আশাৰ তালিৰ দাঁতৰ নিদৰাৰ পদ বৰ্জিতেন। 'তিনি তাহাৰে না।' বেনদাসি, দেৱীৰে পিগি বনিতেন। তিনি তাৰ প্ৰদাশান সোনাগি দেৱীৰে বৰ্জিতেন, 'নিগি, না।' তাহা বলিলেন তাৰ সত্য, কিন্তু এৰা বৰা তিনি আপনা নিগি প্ৰাপ্ত বৰ্জিতেন। তিনি তাৰ পৰীক্ষাৰ সৰ্বশ্ৰেষ্ঠ হইবোৱেন এন্ মালীয়া তাৰ নাচ হইবোৱে। এই বেনদাসি প্ৰাৰ্থনা নীলাৰ তাৰ উপৰে হুই বেনদাস তিনি এত এটি নাজিৰা প্ৰতিষ্ঠান।' বেনদাস উত্তৰ দিলে সোনাগি দেৱী বেনদাসৰে ভাৱিগা দিহা বৰ্জিতেন। 'পাৰে মালীয়া বেনদাস উপৰে হুই, বেনদাস জন্ম বি তুনি এত বাত নাজিৰা প্ৰতিষ্ঠান।' তিনি উত্তৰ দিলে বনিতেন যে, বেনদাস তাৰ ভাব তাহাৰ বতৰা হইবোৱে। তখন বেনদাস দিলেন, 'হুইচ হুইচ তেনা হুইচ নাজি, সে জন্ম অদৃষ্টৰ উপৰ নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিত হুইচ। যদি এই পৰীক্ষাৰ মালীয়া বেনদাস উপৰে হুই, আমি বিছুত দুঃখিত হুইচ না। একপ বেনদাসি তাৰ ভাব হুইচ।'

গুৰুদাস তনীয় বৰাৰ সৰ্বাধীনতা উপলক্ষি বৰিগা হুইচ নাজিৰা প্ৰাপ্ত বৰ দিলেন। সৌভাগ্যক্ৰমে তিনি এই পৰীক্ষাতেও সৰ্বশ্ৰেষ্ঠ হইলেন এন্ সোনাৰ মেডেল পাইলেন।

৫। গুৰুদাস বহুতমপূৰ বোৰা ছয় বৎসৰ ওলাওতা বৰিগা বনিতাত হুইবোৰো ওলাওতা আৰম্ভ বনেন। হুইবোৰোৰ স্ত্ৰগ্ৰন্থিৰ নিচানপতি গুৰুদাসৰে দিলে সত্যি এৰদিন তাৰা সাক্ষাৎ হব। ছাববানাত তাহাৰে দিহা বনিলেন, 'গাৰা বেনও বৰ্জ বনিতাৰে সত্যে দুই পাশে দেখি, না উপৰে দেখি?' তিনি তৎকাল উত্তৰ দিলেন, 'আমা দুই পাশেই দেখি, কিন্তু তাহাৰ বাৰণ এই যে, দুই পাশে দুই চানি জন আচেন—মাঁচাৰ উপৰে দেখেন। যদি বেনপ মোৰ দেহেই না থাকিতেন, তাহা হইলে আমা দুই পাশেও দেখিতাম না।' ছাববানাত। এই উত্তৰে অতিশয় প্ৰীত হইবা বলিলেন, "Capital Advocacy (উৎকৃষ্ট প্ৰশংসা)।"

৬। গুৰুদাসৰ দৃঢ়বিশ্বাস ছিল যে, লোভ সংকল্পপূৰ্বক সত্য ও বৰ্মপথে গাৰিগা বৰ্ত্তব্য পালন কৰিলে, ভগবানেৰ কৃপা প্ৰাপ্ত হওনা যায়। তিনি প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰি লইবা এৰা মোৰমা প্ৰাৰ্থ কৰিগাছিলেন। উহাৰ বিচাৰেৰ পূৰ্বদিমে বেলা চানিটোৰ পদ এৰে মালৰ পদদিন তাহাৰে বহুতমপূৰে একটা বড মোৰদমা বনিতাৰ নিমিত্ত লইবা হুইবান অন্য উপস্থিত হইল এন্ ১৫০০ টাকা ফী বাৰ্হ হইল। তিনি তাহাৰ পূৰ্ব মৰ্কেলৰে বলিলেন যে, তাহাৰ মোৰদমাৰ অপৰ পশেৰ বলিবাৰ কিছুই নাই এন্ তাহাৰ জন্মলাভ স্বনিশ্চিত। যদি তিনি সম্মত হন, তাহাৰ মোৰদমাৰ অপৰ পশেৰ ভাব অপৰ কোনও উকীলকে দিয়া তিনি সেই নাজিৰাতেই বহুতমপূৰ যাত্ৰা বনিতো পানেন। কিন্তু তাহাৰ মৰ্কেল এই প্ৰস্তাবে কিছুতেই সম্মত হইলেন না। তখন তিনি বহুতমপূৰেৰ মৰ্কেলৰে বলিলেন যে, এ-কৈত্রে তিনি তাহাৰ মোৰদমা গ্ৰহণ কৰিতে অক্ষম। উক্ত মৰ্কেল বহুতমপূৰেৰ ভেদে নিৰট টেলিগ্ৰাম কৰিলেন যে, যদি তিনি অনুগ্ৰহপূৰ্বক তাহাৰ মোৰদমাৰ বিচাৰেৰ অন্য এৰাটি দিন বাৰ্হ কৰেন, তাহা হইলে গুৰুদাসবাৰে উহাতে নিযুক্ত কৰা সম্ভবপন হয়। ভক্ত এই প্ৰাৰ্থনা মঞ্জুৰ কৰিলেন। তাহাতে গুৰুদাস কলিকাতাৰ মোৰদমাৰ ৫০ টাকা এন্ বহুতমপূৰেৰ মোৰদমাৰ ১,৫০০ টাকা পাইলেন এন্ ভগবৎকৃপায় অন্য একপ্ৰকাৰে তাহাৰ ৫০০ টাকা প্ৰাপ্তি হইগাছিল।

তিনি তাঁহান বাঁচিব সংলগ্ন একগু ডমি ক্ৰয় কৰিবান জন্য উৎসুক ছিলেন। যে দানান উক্ত কাৰ্যে নিযুক্ত হইয়াছিল, সে গোপনে ডমি-বিক্ৰেতাৰে ডমি মূল্য ৩,০০০ টাবা নিদিষ্ট কৰিতে বলে, উহাৰ নানা ৫০০ টাবা সে পাইবে, এইকপ বন্দোবস্ত হয়। যে-দিন হাইকোর্ট ওবদায় বহনপুনেৰ মোকদ্দমা প্ৰত্যাহ্বান দাবন উক্ত দানান তথাগ উপস্থিত ছিল। তাঁহান এই অগাধবণ লোভশূন্যতা ও বৰ্ণপৰায়ণতা দেখিয়া দানান নিজেৰ অগদাচৰণেৰ জন্য অত্যন্ত দুঃখিত হইয়া ওবদায়েন নিকট ক্ষমা প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিলে এবং তিনি ২,৫০০ টাবা মূল্য উক্ত ডমি ক্ৰয় কৰিলেন। বৰ্ষকালৰ আশা সম্পূৰ্ণকপে ত্যাগ কৰিয়া ঠিক পথে চলিতে পাবিলে ভগবৎকৃপায় পৰিণামে মজলই হয়, ওবদায় সৰ্বদাই এই কথা বলিতেন।

৭। হাইকোর্টৰ বিচাৰপতি নিযুক্ত হইয়া ওবদায় মখন ডগনীন্দে প্ৰধান বনিলেন, ডগনী ডিহায়া কৰিলেন “তোমাৰে দাঁগাঁৰ হুকুম দিতে হইবে কি” উত্তৰে তিনি বলিলেন যে, তাঁহাকে নিজে দাঁগাঁৰ হুকুম দিতে হইবে না, বিচাৰোনাৰ ডাঙৰ একপ হুকুম মধুনেৰ জন্য তাঁহান নিৰ্ভৰ আশিলে কোন কোন স্থানে তাহাকে উহা মধুন বসিতে হইতে পাবে। তাহান পৰ ডগনী বলিলেন,

এতদিন তুমি কেবল নিজেৰ মাজেৰে পৰামৰ্শ দি নবসিতেছিল। এখন তোমাৰে উভয় পক্ষৰ উৰীলৈৰ বক্তৃতা শুনিয়া বিচাৰ বসিতে হইবে অৰ্থাৎ সত্য কোথায় আছে হিব বসিতে হইবে। মনেৰে স্থান উহা হিব দবা বঠিন। সেইজন্য বিচাৰদানে কেবল নিজেৰ বিদ্যা ও বুদ্ধিৰ উপৰ নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিও না, কিন্তু সেই সৰ্বত্ৰ ও সম্ভাৱিত ভণানন্দে নিদা ভক্তিভাৱে প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিবে, যেন তিনি তোমাৰে সত্য-নিৰ্ণয়েৰ পৰা দেখাইয়া দেন এবং তোমাৰ দাবা কোনওকপ অন্যায় বিচাৰ না হয়। তিনি ডগনীৰ এই অনুমতি উপদেশ শিনোবাৰ্গ কৰিয়া বিচাৰবাৰ্গ বসিতেন। তাঁহান বিচাৰাগন-ত্যাগেৰ দিন, এড্‌ভোকেট জেনাবেল্ উদ্ভক যাহেৰ যাহা বলিয়াছিল, তাহান মৰ্মানুবাদ এইকপ— “আপনান সম্মুখে আনান যতদূৰ অভিজ্ঞতা আছে, যাহা আপনান সমগ্ৰ বিচাৰপতিজনে বাৰ্ষপ্ৰণালী লগ্য কৰিয়া লাভ কৰিয়াছি তদনুসাৰে আমি মগোবনে বলিতে পাবি যে, কোন বিচাৰপ্ৰাৰ্থী কোন সময়ে একথা বলিতে পাবেন নাই যে, আপনি ননোযোগপূৰ্বক তাঁহান মোকদ্দমা ওনেৰ নাই, বুঝিবান চেষ্টা কৰেন নাই, স্বপক্ষ-বিপক্ষেৰ তৰ্ক-বিতৰ্ক বিচাৰ কৰেন নাই বা মোকদ্দমাৰ অন্যান্য গীমাংসা কৰিয়াছেন। যিনি মোকদ্দমা বসিতে আসিয়া পৰাচিত হইয়াছেন, তিনিও বিচাৰালয় ত্যাগ কৰিবান সময়ে কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন যে, ‘আপনি ন্যায়মন্ত্ৰত বিচাৰই কৰিয়াছেন।’ আপনান সমগ্ৰ ওবালতিবালে ও জজিয়তিসময়ে আপনি নিৰপেক্ষ, স্পষ্টবাদী ও ধাৰ্মিকৰে ন্যায় বৰ্ষ কৰিয়াছেন।”

বহনপুনেৰ বিনবণ

১। বহনপুন কলেজেৰ আইনেৰ অব্যাপক বাবু নমানাথ নন্দী মহাশয়েৰ পৰলোক-গমনেৰ পৰে তাঁহাৰ স্থানাভিষিক্ত হইয়া ওবদায় ১৮৬৬ খৃষ্টাব্দেৰ শেষভাগে বহনপুৰে যাত্ৰা কৰেন। সে সময়ে তাঁহান ভূতপূৰ্ব অব্যাপক বৰাট হ্যাণ্ড বহনপুন কলেজেৰ অধ্যক্ষ ছিলেন, এবং বেভাবেও লালবিহাৰী দে ও বাসবিহাৰী ঘোষ ইংৰাজী সাহিত্যেৰ ও পণ্ডিত বাসগতি ন্যায়বদ মহাশয় সংস্কৃত সাহিত্যেৰ অধ্যাপক ছিলেন। কলিকাতা শোভাবাজাবেৰ বাজা প্ৰসন্ননাৰায়ণ দেৰ তৎকালে মুম্বিদাবাদেৰ নবাব-নাৰ্জিমেৰ দেওয়ান ছিলেন। ওকদায়েৰ মাতুল গঙ্গানাৰায়ণ গঙ্গোপাধ্যায়েৰ সহিত দেওয়ান মহাশয়েৰ বিশেষ ঘনিষ্ঠতা ছিল।

সে সময়ে “Stephen’s Commentaries on the Laws of England” নামক পুস্তক B L পৰীক্ষাৰ পাঠ্য ছিল। এই পুস্তকেৰ মূল্য অধিক বলিয়া মধ্যবিত্ত অবস্থাব ছাত্ৰগণ উহা ক্ৰয় কৰিতে অক্ষম দেখিয়া ওকদাস তাহাদেৰ পাঠেৰ সুবিধাৰ জন্য উহাৰ একখানি সংক্ষিপ্ত

নোট প্রস্তুত কৰিয়া তাহাদেৰ লেখাইয়া দিতেন। তাহান সনথ আইন বিশেষতঃ দণ্ডনিৰি আইন-অধ্যাপনাৰ প্ৰণালী এত ভাল ছিল যে, নুশিদানাদেৰ তাৎকালিক বৰিশান Mr C. A. Campbell (বাদালাৰ ছোটলাট বিখ্যাত স্যান জৰ্জ ন্যাৱেলেন সোসদন) এৰং “নীলদৰ্পণ” পুস্তকেৰ বিখ্যাত অনুবাদক Rev Mr Long নান্য নান্য তাহান Penal Code পড়ান শুনিতে আগিতেন। কমিশনাৰ সাহেব তাহাৰ বাৎসৰিক এডমিনিষ্ট্ৰেচন নিৰপাৰ্টে ওনদাসেৰ অধ্যাপনাৰ বিতৰণ সুখ্যাতি লিপিবদ্ধ কৰিয়া গিনাচেন।

গুৰুদাসেৰ মাতুলসহায় ভাগিনেৰ যাহাতে নৃত নমানাথ নদীৰ স্থানে নবান সৰদাৰে উৰীল নিযুক্ত হন সে জন্য বাজা প্ৰসন্ননাৰায়ণৰে অনুৰোধ বদেন। বাজা তদুত্তৰে বনেন, “আপনাৰ ভাগিনেৰটি যে প্ৰকাৰ নিৰীহ তাহাতে তাঁহাৰে নবান সৰদাৰেৰ সহকাৰী উৰীল নিযুক্ত বদিত আমাৰ সাহস হয় না।” গুৰুদাস এই উত্তৰ শুনিয়া বিচুন্নাত্ৰ শূণ্য না হইয়া বনেন, ‘নানা, কেন অনুৰোধ কৰিলেন? আনি যদি ভালকপ আইন-ব্যবসা চালাইতে পাৰি তাস হইলে দেওমান বাহাদুৰ স্বতঃপ্ৰবৃত্ত হইয়া আমাকে নবান সৰদাৰেৰ উৰীল নিযুক্ত বদিতে নান্য হইবেন। আনান অদৃষ্টে নবাবেৰ বনাগাৰ হইতে যাহা প্ৰাপ্য ধৰ্ম আছে, তাহান এবাৰি পয়সাও বেহ নাভাইতে না বনাইতে পাৰিবে না।’ অদৃষ্টবাদ এৰং ভগবানেৰ সুবিচাৰেৰ উপৰ তাহান দৃঢ়নিশ্চয় এই উক্তি হইতে প্ৰকাশ পাইতেছে।

এই সময়ে এক পৰিচিত ভদ্ৰলোক ওনদাসৰে-বনেন “ভায়া, বহননপুৰ সানগা, এখানে দুই একটা কপা-বাঁধা হুঁকা ও এনটা ফৰসী কৰ, নটলে খাতিস হইবে না, সজাত নক্কেলও ছুটিবে না।” তিনি কখনও ধূমসেবা কৰেন নাই, এৰং তদুত্তৰে বনেন, “দাদা, যদি কপা-বাঁধা হুঁকা বা ফৰসীৰ জোৰে আমাৰ মোকদ্দমা পাইবাৰ সুবিধা হয়, তাহা হইলে এমন পয়সানে আনান প্ৰয়োজন নাই, আমি গুকাইয়া মনি সেও ভাল।”

২। এই সময়ে বহননপুৰ আদালতে নবাব-নাজিমেৰ সজিত এৰ খোজাব এৰ বড মোকদ্দমা বাবে। ঐ মোকদ্দমাৰ উভয় পক্ষৰেই বিশেষ জিদ ছিল। নবাব-নাজিমেৰ পক্ষেৰ প্ৰধান উৰীল বাবু আশুতোষ চট্টোপাধ্যায় মোকদ্দমা-সংক্ৰান্ত সমস্ত বাগতপত্ৰ তনা তনা বৰিয়া দেখিয়া দেওমান বাজা প্ৰসন্ননাৰায়ণকে বনেন যে, মোকদ্দমাৰ নবাবেৰ জয়লাভেৰ বিশেষ সম্ভাবনা নাই, মোকদ্দমা মিটমাট হইলেই ভাল হয়। ঘটনাক্ৰমে গুৰুদাস সেই সময়ে সেইস্থলে উপস্থিত ছিলেন, এৰং তিনি এই মোকদ্দমা-সংক্ৰান্ত সমস্ত বৃত্তান্ত পূৰ্ব হইতে জানিতেন। দেওমান বাহাদুৰ তাঁহাকে দেখিয়া জিজ্ঞাসা কৰেন, “কি, গুৰুদাস বাবু, আপনাৰ কি মত?” তদুত্তৰে তিনি বলিলেন, “এ মোকদ্দমা চালাইলে নবাব-নাজিম জয়লাভ কৰিবেন, তাহাৰ অনেক কাৰণ আছে।” দেওমান মহাশয় উভয় উৰীলেৰ মত নবাব-নাজিমেৰ কৰ্ণগোচৰ কৰেন। নবাব-নাজিম গুৰুদাসকে ডাকাইয়া তাহান সমস্ত কথা ও মন্তব্য শুনেৰ, এৰং তাহান ঘাৰা ঐ মোকদ্দমা-সংক্ৰান্ত সমস্ত বৃত্তান্ত লেখাইয়া কলিকাতা হাইকোর্টে বিখ্যাত কাউন্সেল Mr R. V. Doyne সাহেবেৰ নিকট উহা অপৰাপৰ কাগজপত্ৰেৰ সহিত পাঠাইয়া দেন। ডয়েন সাহেব গুৰুদাসেৰ সহিত একমত হইয়া লিখিত মত দেন। উত্তৰ-কালে ঐ মোকদ্দমাৰ নবাব-নাজিমেৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ জয়লাভ হয়, এৰং তাহাৰ সমস্ত বক্ষা হয় ও প্ৰায় বিশ সহস্ৰ টাকা লাভ হয়। উহাতে সন্তুষ্ট হইয়া তিনি গুৰুদাসকে তাহাৰ স্টেটেৰ এৰজন সহকাৰী উৰীল নিযুক্ত কৰেন, এৰং পাৰিতোষিক-বাবদ তাহাকে স্বৰ্ণেৰ ঘড়ি ও চেন দেন।

৩। প্ৰথম প্ৰথম বহননপুৰে গুৰুদাস দেওয়ানী মোকদ্দমা অপেক্ষা ফৌজদাৰী মোকদ্দমা অধিক পাইতেন। ঐ সকল মোকদ্দমাৰ মক্কেলেৰ জয়লাভ হইবে কি না, অতদৃষ্টি ঘাৰা তাহা বুঝিবাৰ তাহাৰ অদ্ভুত ক্ষমতা ছিল। পূৰ্বোক্ত খোজাব মোকদ্দমাৰ এই ক্ষমতা বিলক্ষণ প্ৰকাশ পাইয়াছে।

একটি ফৌজদাৰী মোকদ্দমা অতি কৌশলেৰ সহিত চালাইয়া জয়লাভ কৰায়, তাঁহাৰ খ্যাতিবৃদ্ধি হইয়া পড়ে। বহুবমপুৰেৰ কোন ধনবান্ জমিদাৰ একমাত্ৰ পুত্ৰ, একটি অবিবাহিতা কন্যা ও এক পত্নী ৰাখিয়া পৰলোকগমন কৰেন। মৃত্যুৰ কিঞ্চিৎ পূৰ্বে তিনি তাঁহাৰ সমস্ত সম্পত্তি পত্নীৰ নামে বেনামী কৰেন। এক দৰিদ্ৰ ব্যক্তিৰ সহিত কন্যাটিৰ বিবাহ হয়। বিবাহকাল হইতে কন্যাৰ স্বামী শাশুড়ীৰ আশ্ৰয়ে বাস কৰিতে থাকেন। শাশুড়ীৰ মৃত্যুৰ পৰ জামাতা তাঁহাৰ বন্ধুগণেৰ পৰামৰ্শ-নুসাৰে পত্নীৰ পক্ষ হইতে শাশুড়ীৰ নামীয় বিষয়েৰ অংশপ্ৰাপ্তিৰ মোকদ্দমা কৰিবাৰ অভিপ্ৰায়ে পত্নীকে স্থানান্তৰে লইয়া যাওয়া স্থিৰ কৰেন। কাৰণ এক বাডীতে থাকিয়া ভাই-ভগিনীতে মোকদ্দমা কৰা সুবিধাজনক নহে। স্থানান্তৰে লইয়া যাইবাৰ সময়ে শ্যালক-ভগিনীপতিতে গুৰুতৰ বিবাদ হয়। স্থানীয় পুলিস ভগিনীপতিৰ পক্ষ অবলম্বন কৰে এবং পৰে ডিসট্ৰিক্ট ম্যাজিষ্ট্ৰেট W L Heeley সাহেবেৰ আদালতে মোকদ্দমা বজু হয়। গুৰুদাস সংস্কৃত ভাষাৰ বিশেষ ব্যুৎপন্ন ছিলেন। মোকদ্দমাৰ গবৰ্ণমেন্ট গুৰুদাসকে উকীল নিযুক্ত কৰেন। আৰ শ্যালক স্বপক্ষে বহুবমপুৰেৰ সমস্ত প্ৰধান প্ৰধান উকীল নিযুক্ত কৰেন। গুৰুদাস স্বীয়পক্ষ সমৰ্থন-প্ৰসঙ্গে, “ভৰ্তা বন্ধতি যৌবনে” এই মনু-বচন উদ্ধৃত কৰিয়া বলেন যে, পত্নীকে বন্ধা কৰা একমাত্ৰ পতিবই অধিকাৰ, আৰ কেহই তাহাতে আপত্তি কৰিতে পাৰে না। অধিকন্তু বিবাহিতা কন্যাৰ পিতৃগৃহে বা ভ্ৰাতৃগৃহে অধিককাল বাস কন্যাৰ বিশুদ্ধ-চৰিত্ৰ-সম্বন্ধে দুৰ্নামজনক। ইহা প্ৰতিপন্ন কৰিবাৰ জন্য তিনি মহাকবি কালিদাসেৰ ‘শকুন্তলা’ নাটক হইতে এই শ্লোকটি উদ্ধৃত কৰেন—“সতীমপি জ্ঞাতিকুলৈকসংশ্ৰয়াং জনো-হন্যাথা ভৰ্তৃমতীং বিশঙ্কতে। অতঃ সমীপে পৰিণেতুৰিষ্যতে প্ৰিয়াহপ্ৰিয়া বা প্ৰমদা স্ববন্ধুভিঃ ॥” —এবং বিচাৰপতিৰে বুঝাইয়া দেন যে কন্যাটিৰ প্ৰতিনিয়ত বহুদিন ভ্ৰাতৃগৃহে বাস অবৈধ কৰ্ম। এই যুক্তি ম্যাজিষ্ট্ৰেট হৃদয়ঙ্গম কৰেন, এবং জমিদাৰ ভ্ৰাতাকে তিন দিবসেৰ জন্য কাৰাবাসেৰ আজ্ঞা দেন। ইহাতে বহুবমপুৰেৰ মহা হলস্থূল পড়িয়া যায় ও সঙ্গে সঙ্গে গুৰুদাসেৰ পসাব বৃদ্ধি হইয়া পড়ে। তিনি আগাদিগকে বলিতেন যে, এই মোকদ্দমাৰ জয়লাভে তাঁহাৰ কোনও কৃতিত্ব নাই। উহা কতকগুলি অনুকূল পাৰিপাশ্ৰিক ঘটনাৰ ফল। যখন অদৃষ্ট সুপ্ৰসন্ন হয় তখন পূৰ্বোক্ত প্ৰকাৰেৰ যুক্তিতৰ্কৰে বিচাৰালয়ে সুখ্যাতি বৃদ্ধি পায়। এই উক্তি গীতাৰ ভগবানেৰ উক্তিৰ প্ৰতিধ্বনি কৰিতেছে—“কৰ্মণ্যেবাধিকাৰস্তে না ফলেষু কদাচন। মা কৰ্মফলহেতুৰ্ভূৰ্মা তে সঙ্গেহ স্বকৰ্মণি ॥”—অৰ্থাৎ হে অৰ্জুন, কৰ্মেতেই তোমাৰ অধিকাৰ অতএব কৰ্ম কৰা আবশ্যিক, কিন্তু সেই কৰ্মেৰ ফলে তোমাৰ কোন অধিকাৰ নাই জানিবে। ইহা সম্পূৰ্ণ ৰূপে ভগবদধীন, ইচ্ছা কৰিলেই তুমি ফল পাইতে পাৰ না। কিন্তু তুমি কখনও নিজেৰে কৰ্মফলেৰ হেতুভূত মনে কৰিও না, ফল-কামনা পৰিত্যাগ-পূৰ্বক কৰ্ম কৰ।” গুৰুদাস তাঁহাৰ দীৰ্ঘ জীৱনে সমস্ত কৰ্মেই এই উচ্চ আদৰ্শ অবলম্বন কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন।

৪। গুৰুদাস মোকদ্দমা-গ্ৰহণ-সম্বন্ধে নিয়ম কৰিয়াছিল যে, একবাৰ যে মোকদ্দমাৰ কাগজপত্ৰ দেখিবেন, পৰে সে পক্ষে তাঁহাকে উকীল নিযুক্ত না কৰিলেও তিনি কদাচ প্ৰতিপক্ষৰ উকীল হইয়া সে পক্ষ সমৰ্থন কৰিবেন না। তিনি বলিতেন যে, উকীলেৰ ব্যবসা অতি উচ্চ অঙ্কেৰ ব্যবসা। কিঞ্চিৎ অৰ্থেৰ লোভে পক্ষ-পৰিবৰ্তন অতি গহিত কৰ্ম। তিনি আৰও বলিতেন, ওকালতি-সংক্ৰান্ত যে কাৰ্যে শুভফল হইবে না যথাজ্ঞানে বাৰণা হয়, সে কাৰ্যে হস্তক্ষেপ কৰা অনুচিত। বহুবমপুৰে কাৰ্যকালে এই প্ৰকাৰেৰ একটি ঘটনা ঘটিয়াছিল। একজন জমিদাৰ তাঁহাৰ জমিদাৰীৰ সংলগ্ন বিস্তীৰ্ণ চৰজমি পাইবাৰ জন্য তাঁহাকে পৰ্য্যাপ্ত অৰ্থেৰ লোভ দেখাইয়া একখানি আবজি প্ৰস্তুত কৰিতে অনুৰোধ কৰেন। নদী সৰিয়া যাওয়াৰ অপৰ এক জমিদাবেৰ নদী-গৰ্ভ-বিলীন জমিৰ স্থলেই পৰে এই চৰজমি উৎপন্ন হয়। তখন হাইকোর্টেৰ এইৰূপ নজীৰ ছিল যে, যদি কাহাৰও ভূমি জলমগ্ন

হইয়া, পৰে উহান স্থলে চৰভূমি উৎপন্ন হয়, তাহা হইলে ঐ চৰভূমিতে তাহান বোন স্বল্প বয়সে থাকিবে না, কিন্তু উহা সন্নিবিষ্ট ভূমি বৃদ্ধি বলিয়া গণ্য হইবে, এবং এই শোষণত ভূমি অবিদ্যমান হইবে। গুৰুদাস উক্ত ভূমিদানকে বলেন যে, হাইকোর্টৰ নতুন সম্পূৰ্ণ ন্যায়নিৰ্দ্ধাৰ, এবং তাঁহাকে তামাদিৰ সময় পৰ্যন্ত অপেক্ষা বনিত্ত উপদেশ দেন। কিছুদিন পৰেই থিৰি বাউন্সিলে এই চূড়ান্ত নিষ্পত্তি হয় যে বোন ব্যক্তিৰ ভূমি ভলমগু হইয়া পৰে উহান স্থলে চৰভূমি উৎপন্ন হইলে তাহাতে সেই ব্যক্তিৰই স্বল্প বয়সে থাকিবে, নিৰ্দ্ধাৰিত ভূমিদান উহা তাঁহান ভূমি বৃদ্ধি বলিয়া পাইতে পাবেন না। ভূমিদানবাবু চূড়ান্ত বিচাৰ ভাত হইয়া গুৰুদাসৰে শত শত অন্যায় দেন ও বলেন, “মহাশয়, আপনি আমাকে বহু অর্থ ব্যয় হইতে বাচাইয়া দিয়াছেন, ভগবান্ আপনান মঙ্গল বনিনেন।”

৫। ১৮৬৮ খৃষ্টাব্দেৰ ফেব্রুৱাৰী মাহে গুৰুদাস “থেনচাদ নামচাঁদ স্টুডেন্টশিপ” পৰীক্ষা দিবাৰ জন্য দুই সপ্তাহেৰ ছুটি লইয়া বলিৰাতান গমন কৰেন। উক্ত পৰীক্ষা সেই বৎসৰ সৰ্বপ্রথম গৃহীত হয়। বেভাবেও কালীচৰণ বন্দোপাধ্যায় ও আশুতোষ মুখোপাধ্যায়ও এই পৰীক্ষা দিয়াছিলেন। তিন দিবাৰ পৰীক্ষা দিয়া কালীচৰণবাবু অসুস্থ হইয়া পড়েন। গুৰুদাস ইংৰাজী-সাহিত্য ইতিহাস, দৰ্শন, অমিশ্র ও মিশ্র গণিত এই পাঁচটি বিষয়ে পৰীক্ষা দেন এবং আঙৰাবু প্রথমোক্ত তিনিবি বিষয়ে পৰীক্ষা দেন। পৰীক্ষা শেষ হইবান পৰ পৰীক্ষাবৰ্গৰ হিন্দু বনিলেন যে যদি বোন উত্তৰ-পত্রে শতবৰা ৪০ নম্বৰেৰ কম হয় উহা গ্রাহ্য হইবে না। এই নিয়মানুসারে গুৰুদাসেৰ দুই তিনি উত্তৰ-পত্ৰ অগ্রাহ্য হয়, এবং তাহাৰ ফলে আঙৰাবু পৰীক্ষান বৃত্তি দশ হাজাৰ টানা লাভ কৰেন। পৰীক্ষান পাশ না হওয়ায় গুৰুদাস কিষ্কিৎ দুঃখিত হন বাৰণ এ পৰ্যন্ত এক এ পৰীক্ষা হইতে বোনও পৰীক্ষাৰ তিনি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে দ্বিতীয় হন নাই।

তিনি এখন সংস্কৃত ভাষায় ব্যুৎপত্তি-লাভেৰ ইচ্ছা কৰিলেন, এবং পণ্ডিত নামগতি ন্যায়বন্দেৰ নিকট তাঁহাৰ ইচ্ছা প্রকাশ কৰেন। তাঁহাৰ পঠদশায় সংস্কৃত ভাষা কলেজে সহকাৰী ভাষাকৰ্ম পড়ান হইত না। ন্যায়বন্দ মহাশয়েৰ উপদেশানুসারে তিনি মুকুবোৰ ব্যাবৰণ ও অনবকোষ সমগ্র অধ্যয়ন কৰেন, এবং বধুবংশ কুমাৰসত্তৰ, মেঘদূত, একুত্তলা ও উত্তৰনামচৰিত পাঠ কৰেন। ন্যায়বন্দ মহাশয় তাঁহাৰ নিজেৰ উত্তৰনামচৰিত পুস্তকখানি গুৰুদাসেৰ উপহাৰ দেন এবং বলেন, “আপনি আমাৰ ন্যায় অনেক শিক্ষক পাইবেন কিন্তু আমি আপনান ন্যায় ছাত্র পাইব না।” সংস্কৃত ভাষায় ব্যুৎপত্তিৰ ফলে তিনি সাংখ্য, যোগ, ন্যায় প্রভৃতি ষড়্‌দৰ্শনে এবং মনু, যাড্‌বল্য, দায়ভাগ, মিতাক্ষৰা, বিবাদচিন্তামণি প্রভৃতি স্মৃতিশাস্ত্র-গ্রন্থে প্রগাঢ় ব্যুৎপত্তি লাভ কৰিয়াছিলেন।

তিনি আমাকে বলিয়াছিলেন যে তিনি থেনচাঁদ বাচচাঁদ বৃত্তি পাইলে তাঁহাৰ মাতৃদেবী সম্ভবতঃ বহুবমপুৰে আৰ থাকিতে চাহিতেন না। তাহা হইলে ন্যায়বন্দ মহাশয়েৰ নিৰ্দ্ধাৰ তাঁহাৰ সংস্কৃত পড়া হইত না এবং এত শীঘ্র কলিকাতা হাইকোর্টে বাইলে তাঁহাৰ পৰাৰ তাদৃশ অধিক হইত না। প্রাক্তন কৰ্মফল অবশ্যই ভোগ কৰিতে হইবে। নচেৎ পৰম-দয়ালু ভগবানেৰ বিধান পৰিণামে মঙ্গল-জনকই হয় এই দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস আমাদেৰ থাকা উচিত।

ওকালতী জীবন—হাইকোর্ট

৬। ১৮৭২ খৃষ্টাব্দেৰ শেষভাগে গুৰুদাস হাইকোর্টে ওকালতি আৰম্ভ কৰেন। একদিন তিনি কয়েকখানি Weekly Reporter এক পুৰাতন পুস্তকেৰ দোকান হইতে ক্ৰয় কৰিয়া হাইকোর্টেৰ দপ্তৰীকে বাঁধাইতে দেন। ঐ সকল পুস্তকেৰ মধ্যে একখানিতে “Library High Court” ছাপ দেওয়া ছিল, গুৰুদাস ক্ৰয় কৰিবাৰ সময়ে তাহা লক্ষ্য কৰিয়া দেখেন নাই। ইহাৰ কিছু পূৰ্ব হইতে হাইকোর্টেৰ বেজিষ্টাৰ এক ঘোষণা-পত্ৰ বাহিৰ কৰেন যে, লাইব্ৰেৰি

একখানি Weekly Reporter পাওযা যাইতেছে না। দণ্ডবী গুৰুদাসকে বলে যে, যে-পাতাৰ ছাপ আছে সেই পাতাখানি ছিঁড়িয়া ফেলিলেই সব চুকিয়া যায়, কিন্তু তিনি এই প্ৰস্তাবে অসম্মত হন। স্ততবাং সমস্ত অবস্থা বেজিষ্ট্ৰাৰেৰ কৰ্ণগোচৰ হওযাৰ তদন্ত হয়। তাহাতে প্ৰকাশ পায় যে, একজন বিচাৰপতি আপনাৰ প্ৰযোজনে দেখিবাৰ জন্য সেই পুস্তকখানি লাইব্ৰেৰি হইতে গ্ৰহণ কৰেন এবং কেবত দিতে বিস্মৃত হইয়া ছুটি লইয়া স্বদেশে গমন কৰেন। তিনি স্বদেশ হইতে প্ৰত্যা-বৰ্তন না কৰায় তাঁহাৰ সমস্ত দ্ৰব্য বিক্ৰীত হয়, এবং সেই সঙ্গে হাইকোর্টেৰ পুস্তকখানি একজন পুৰাতন-পুস্তকবিক্ৰেতাৰ হস্তে পড়ে, এবং সে উহা গুৰুদাসকে বিক্ৰয় কৰে। তিনি তখন দণ্ডবীকে বলেন, “দেখ্লে দণ্ডবী, সত্য কথাৰ মাৰ নাই।” এই ঘটনা-দ্বাৰা তাঁহাৰ অসাধাৰণ সত্যনিষ্ঠা প্ৰকাশ পাইতেছে।

৭। গুৰুদাসেৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ লোভশূন্যতা-নশ্বৰ্কে একটি ঘটনা পূৰ্বেই বিবৃত কৰিয়াছি। এই নশ্বৰ্কে আৰ দুইটি ঘটনাৰ উল্লেখ কৰিতেছি। দুইজন মক্কেল একখানি জটিল উইলেৰ উপৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ লিখিত মতেৰ প্ৰাৰ্থী হইয়া সমস্ত কাগজপত্ৰ দিয়া যান। কবেক দিন পৰে তাঁহাৰ মত প্ৰস্তুত হইলে, মক্কেলদ্বয় ফি-নশ্বৰ্কে জিজ্ঞাসা কৰিলে তিনি বলেন, “তিন মোহৰেৰ কম নহে এবং পাঁচ মোহৰেৰ অধিক নহে।” তাঁহাৰা তৎকণাৎ পাঁচ মোহৰ দিলে তিনি বলেন, “আপনাৰা সৰ্বাপেক্ষা অধিক ফি-ই দিলেন।” তদুত্তৰে তাঁহাৰা বলেন, “একপ জটিল উইলেৰ উপৰ আপনাৰ ন্যায স্ববিজ্ঞ উকীলেৰ লিখিত মত দশ মোহৰেৰ কমে হইতে পাৰে না, এইকপ মনে কৰিয়া আনবা দশ মোহৰ আনিয়াছিলাম, আপনি উহাৰ অৰ্ধ মাত্ৰ লইলেন।” তাঁহাৰা গুৰুদাসেৰ অসাধাৰণ লোভশূন্যতা দেখিয়া বিস্মিত হইয়াছিলেন।

গুৰুদাসেৰ এক আত্মীয় দুইজন মক্কেলেৰ একটি মোকদ্দমাৰ কাগজপত্ৰ দেখাইবাৰ জন্য তাঁহাৰ নিকটে লইয়া যান। তখন কাগজপত্ৰ দেখিতে তিনি ২৫ টাকা মাত্ৰ ফি লইতেন। এই দুই ব্যক্তিৰ কাগজপত্ৰ দেখিয়া তিনি কিছুই লন নাই, কিন্তু বলিয়াছিলেন, “এ মোকদ্দমাৰ আমি ব্ৰতী হইব না, কাৰণ পৰিণামে ইহাতে জয়লাভ হইবে না।” মক্কেলদ্বয় এই কথায় অসন্তুষ্ট হইয়া চলিয়া যান এবং হাইকোর্টেৰ প্ৰসিদ্ধ উকীল বাবু নীলমাধৱ বসুকে নিযুক্ত কৰেন। বহুদিন ধৰিয়া ঐ মোকদ্দমা চলে, কিন্তু সৰ্বশেষে মক্কেলদ্বয় পৰাজিত ও সৰ্বস্বাত হন। গুৰুদাস ইচ্ছা কৰিলে এই মোকদ্দমা চালাইয়া অনেক অৰ্থ উপাৰ্জন কৰিতে পাৰিতেন কিন্তু তাঁহাৰ বিবেক তাঁহাকে বাধা দিল।

হাইকোর্টে বিচাৰপতি—১৮৮৮

৮। হাইকোর্টেৰ বিচাৰপতি নিযুক্ত হইয়া গুৰুদাস যখন জৰ্জটিন্স্ নবিসেৰ সঙ্গে বসিতেন, তখন এবদিন জনৈক উৰীল জ্বৰাজ্ঞাস্ত হইয়া তাহাৰ একটি মোকদ্দমা মূলতুৰি বাৰ্খিবাৰ প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰেন। জৰ্জটিন্স্ নবিস গুৰুদাসেৰ দিকে চাহিয়া বলেন, “এ ব্যক্তিকে দেখিয়া সম্পূৰ্ণ স্তম্ভ বলিয়া বোধ হইতেছে।” তখন গুৰুদাস বলেন, “আপনি আমাকে দেখিয়া কিৰূপ মনে কৰিতেছেন?” জৰ্জটিন্স্ নবিস বলেন, “আপনাৰে সম্পূৰ্ণ স্তম্ভ দেখাইতেছে।” গুৰুদাস বলেন, “আপনি কি বিশ্বাস কৰিবেন যে আমি স্বাভাৱিক অগ্নিমান্দ্য-হেতু দুই দিন উপবাস কৰিতেছি?” এই কথা শুনিয়া জৰ্জটিন্স্ নবিস উচৈচঃস্বৰে বলিয়া উঠিলেন, “Oh, you Brahmms are wonderful people!” (তোমাৰা ব্ৰাহ্মণ-জাতি বিস্ময়কৰ লোক)। তিনি উকীলেৰ প্ৰাৰ্থনা তৎকণাৎ নথুন কৰিলেন। পৰে গুৰুদাস তাঁহাকে বলিলেন যে, উক্ত উকীল মিথ্যাকথা বলিয়া মোকদ্দমা মূলতুৰিৰ প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিয়াছেন, একপ বাৰণা কৰা তাঁহাৰ ঠিক হয় নাই। হাইকোর্টেৰ বান এত অবনত নহে।

৯। আৰ একদিন একজন পূৰ্ববঙ্গদেশীয় উকীল বড়তান সমনে দুই একটি ইংৰাজী শব্দেৰ ভুল উচ্চাৰণ কৰিতেছিলেন। তাহাতে জৰ্জটিং নবিস কিঞ্চিৎ বিনন্ত হইয়া গুৰুদাসকে বলেন, “উকীলেবা সাধাৰণ ইংৰাজী শব্দেৰ গুৰু উচ্চাৰণ শিক্ষা কৰেন না কেন?” তদুত্তৰে গুৰুদাস বলেন, “যে-ভাষায় ‘love’ শব্দেৰ উচ্চাৰণ ‘লাভ্’, ‘move’ শব্দেৰ উচ্চাৰণ ‘মুভ্’ এবং ‘rove’ শব্দেৰ উচ্চাৰণ ‘বোভ্,’ বাদ্ৰালীৰ পক্ষে সেই ভাষায় শব্দেৰ গুৰু উচ্চাৰণ শিক্ষা কৰা কিকপ কঠিন, তাহা আপনি ভাবিয়া দেখুন। আপনাৰা বঙ্গভাষা ও উৰ্দুভাষা শিক্ষা কৰেন না বলিয়াই বিচাৰপ্রার্থীদিগকে আবজি, জবাবপত্ৰ, এবং মোকদ্দমা-সংক্রান্ত দলিল প্রভৃতি ইংৰাজীতে অনুবাদ কৰাইতে হয়, এবং সেইজন্য তাহাদেৰ অনেক ব্যয় হয়।” জৰ্জটিং নবিস বলিলেন, “বঙ্গ-ভাষা শিক্ষা কৰা বড় কঠিন।” গুৰুদাস বলিলেন “আপনাৰ এ ধাৰণা ঠিৰ নহে। ইংৰাজী ভাষা শিক্ষা কৰা আমাদেৰ পক্ষে যত কঠিন, বঙ্গভাষা শিক্ষা কৰা আপনাদেৰ পক্ষে তাহাৰ চেয়ে অনেক সহজ।”

১০। একদিন জৰ্জটিং নবিস তাঁহাৰ খাস-কানবায় গুৰুদাসকে বলেন, ‘আমি আশ্চৰ্যান্বিত হই যে, আপনাৰা কিকপে কালীকে ঈশ্বৰী বলিয়া উপাসনা কৰেন। ঈশ্বৰ কি একপ বীভৎসাবান (hideous) হইতে পাবেন?’ তদুত্তৰে গুৰুদাস বলেন, ভূনিকম্প, আগুণগিনিৰ অগ্ন্যুৎপাত, ঘূৰ্ণবায়ু (tornado), জলপ্লাবন, মহানাবী প্রভৃতি যে সকল ভয়ঙ্কৰ ঘটনা ঘটে, সে সমস্ত ঈশ্বৰই ঘটান। সেইজন্য আমাদেৰ শাস্ত্ৰকাবগণ, ঈশ্বৰকে কেবল সৌম্যমূৰ্তি চিত্ৰা না কৰিয়া, তিনি যে ভীষণমূৰ্তিও হইতে পাবেন, সেইকপ চিত্ৰা কৰিবাৰ বিবি দিয়াছেন।” এবং তিনি তাঁহাৰ উত্তৰ-সমর্থনार्্থ দেবীমাহাত্ম্যেৰ এই শ্লোকটি আবৃত্তি কৰেন—“সৌম্যানি যানি কপাণি ত্ৰৈলোক্যং বিচৰন্তি তে। যানি চাত্যৰ্থযোবাণি তৈ বক্ষাস্গাংস্তথা ভুৰম্ ॥’ জৰ্জটিং নবিস গুৰুদাসেৰ উত্তৰ সমীচীন বলিয়া স্বীকাৰ কৰিলেন।

ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰ

১১। ১৮৮৯ খৃষ্টাব্দেৰ ডিসেম্বৰ মাস পৰ্যন্ত হাইকোর্টেৰ প্রধান বিচাৰপতি Sir Comer Petheram কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ Vice-Chancellor পদে আসীন ছিলেন। গুৰুদাসকে এই পদে নিযুক্ত কৰিবাৰ পূৰ্বে Lord Lansdowne তাঁহাকে যে-পত্ৰ লিখিয়াছিলেন তাহাৰ মৰ্ম এই —“Sir Comer Petheramএৰ অবসৰ-গ্রহণে কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ Vice-Chancellorএৰ পদ শীঘ্ৰই শূন্য হইবে। আমি বিলক্ষণ বুঝিবাছি যে, আপনি ব্যতীত এমন অন্য কোন ব্যক্তি নাই, যিনি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এবং সৰ্বসাধাৰণেৰ সন্তোষজনকৰূপে এই সম্মান ও সমুচচ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ শূন্যপদ পূৰ্ণ কৰিতে পাবেন। আমি আশা কৰি, এক্ষণে আমাৰ প্রস্তাবিত কাৰ্যে নিয়োগ আপনাৰ প্রীতিকৰ হইবে। আপনাৰ অভিপ্রায় জানিতে পাবিলে আপনাকে ঐ পদে নিয়োগেৰ আদেশ প্রকাশ কৰিব।”

গুৰুদাস ইহাৰ প্রত্যুত্তৰে যাহা লিখেন, তাহাৰ মৰ্ম এই —“আপনি কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ Vice-Chancellorএৰ পদে আমাকে নিযুক্ত কৰিবাৰ ইচ্ছা প্রকাশ কৰিয়া যে-সম্মান দেখাইবাছেন এবং যে-প্রকাৰ অতিশয় সদয়তা প্রকাশ কৰিয়াছেন তজ্জন্য আমি আপনাৰ নিকট গভীৰ কৃতজ্ঞতাপাণে বদ্ধ হইলাম। আপনাৰ প্রদত্ত সদয় উপহাৰ বিশেষ বন্যবাদেৰ সহিত গ্রহণ কৰা আমাৰ কৰ্তব্য, এবং যে দায়িত্বপূৰ্ণ কৰ্মে আপনি কৃপা কৰিয়া আমাকে নিযুক্ত কৰিতে মনঃস্থ কৰিয়াছেন, সেই কৰ্ম সম্পাদন কৰিতে আমি ষথাসাধ্য চেষ্টা কৰিব।”

ইহাৰ প্ৰত্যুত্তৰে Lord Lansdowne বাহা লিখেন তাহাৰ মৰ্ম এই — “আপনি Vice-Chancellorএৰ কৰ্ম কৰিতে সৱত হইয়াছেন অবগত হইয়া পবন আহ্লাদিত হইলাম। আমি তজ্জন্য আপনাকে ও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়কে অভিনন্দন দিতেছি। আপনি যে-প্ৰকাৰ সৌজন্যেৰ সহিত আমাকে পত্ৰ লিখিয়াছেন তাহাৰ জন্যও আপনাকে ধন্যবাদ দিতেছি।”

সমগ্ৰ ভাৰতেৰ কোনও বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে ইহাৰ পূৰ্বে এ-দেশীয় কোনও ব্যক্তি Vice-Chancellorএৰ পদে আসীন হন নাই। গুৰুদাস সৰ্বপ্ৰথম ভাৰতবৰ্ষীয় Vice-Chancellor। কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় তাঁহাৰ জীৱনসৰ্বস্ব ছিল। প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ কাৰ্যে তাঁহাৰ আভ্যন্তৰীণ ও অসাধাৰণ যত্নেৰ কথা বাজপুৰুষগণও জ্ঞাত ছিলেন।

বিচাৰাগনে

১২। বিচাৰ-কাৰ্যে গুৰুদাসেৰ অসাধাৰণ ন্যায্যপনতাৰ এবং বৰ্মসংৰক্ষণ-চেষ্টাৰ কয়েকটি দৃষ্টান্তেৰ উল্লেখ কৰিতেছি। হুগলী জেলাৰ অন্তৰ্গত আমতা মহকুমাৰ মুন্সেফ আদালতেৰ জনৈক উকীল যোগেন্দ্ৰনাৰায়ণ বসু, হুগলীৰ সবজজ আদালতে সাক্ষ্য দিবাৰ সময়ে, এই আদালতেৰ আমলাদিগেৰ অৰৈব সহায়তাৰ কোন একটি মোকদ্দমাৰ কাগজপত্ৰ নষ্ট হয়, এই মৰ্মে অভিযোগ কৰেন। সবজজ মহাশয় ইহাতে যোগেন্দ্ৰবাবুৰ প্ৰতি ক্ৰুদ্ধ হইয়া তাঁহাৰ বিৰুদ্ধে জেলাৰ জজসাহেবেৰ নিকট বিপোর্ট কৰেন ও Legal Practitioners' Act-অনুসারে তাঁহাকে উকীল-শ্ৰেণী হইতে বিতাড়িত কৰিবাদ জন্য প্ৰস্তাব কৰেন। জজসাহেব এই ব্যাপাৰ হাইকোর্টে বিপোর্ট কৰেন। প্ৰধান বিচাৰপতি Su Francis Maclean এবং গুৰুদাস এই বিষয়ে নিষ্পত্তি কৰেন। তাঁহাদেৰ বিচাৰে স্থিৰ হয় যে, যোগেন্দ্ৰবাবু উকীল-শ্ৰেণী হইতে বিতাড়িত হইতে পাবেন না। এই ন্যায্যসদত বিচাৰে হুগলীৰ উকীলগণ ও জনসাধাৰণ অতিশয় হৰ্ষ প্ৰকাশ কৰেন ও গুৰুদাসেৰ মঙ্গল প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰেন।

বোলপুৰেৰ কোন একটি মোকদ্দমাৰ একজন সাক্ষী বাহাতে মোকদ্দমা-সংক্ৰান্ত প্ৰকৃত ঘটনা স্থানীয় বিচাৰপতিৰ নিকট অপ্ৰকাশ বাখে, তজ্জন্য উকীল নৃত্যগোপালবাবু তাহাকে অৰ্থ-হানি বশীভূত কৰিয়াছিল। গুৰুদাসেৰ মতে ইহা গুৰুতৰ অপৰাধ বলিয়া ধাৰণা হয়। উকীলবাবুকে চিৰকালৈৰ জন্য কৰ্মচ্যুত কৰিতে গুৰুদাসেৰ ইচ্ছা ছিল, কিন্তু তাঁহাৰ পূৰ্ব আচৰণ ভাল ছিল বলিয়া, প্ৰধান বিচাৰপতিৰ সহিত একমত হইয়া, তিনি তাঁহাকে ভবিষ্যতে আচৰণ-সংশোধনেৰ জন্য দুই বৎসৰেৰ জন্য ব্যৱসা বন্ধ কৰিবাদ আদেশ দেন।

আসান্সোল ষ্টেশনে একজন বেলগ্ৰে গাৰ্ড এক হিন্দু বালিকাৰ প্ৰতি অত্যাচাৰ কৰে। এই সংক্ৰান্ত মোকদ্দমা গুৰুদাস একজন সাহেব জজেৰ সহিত বসিয়া বিচাৰ কৰেন। সাহেব জজ গভৰ্ন-মেণ্টেৰ পক্ষেৰ সাক্ষীদিগকে বিশ্বাস কৰেন নাই, এবং আসামীকে খালাস দিবাৰ বাব দেন। গুৰুদাস তাঁহাৰ সঙ্গে একমত হন নাই। তাঁহাৰ মতে আসামীৰ বিৰুদ্ধে প্ৰমাণ অত্যন্ত প্ৰবল ছিল, এবং তিনি তাহাকে দণ্ডা দিয়া পৃথক্ বাব দেন। মোকদ্দমাটি প্ৰধান বিচাৰপতিৰ নিকট উপস্থিত কৰা হয়, এবং তিনি পৰিণেমে গুৰুদাসেৰ সহিত একমত হইয়া দণ্ডা দিয়া বাতিল নাথেন।

১৩। জনসাধাৰণ গুৰুদাসেৰ কোনও কাৰ্যেৰ প্ৰশংসা কৰিলে তাহা তাঁহাৰ এন্দেবান্ধই অপ্ৰীতিবৰ হইত। তিনি সৰ্বদা অস্তৰালে থাকিয়া বৰ্ম কৰিতে ভালবাসিতেন। তিনি যখন Indian Universities Commissionএৰ মেম্বৰ নিযুক্ত হন তখন সান্দাচৰণ নিত্ৰ তাঁহাৰ হলে বিচাৰপতি নিযুক্ত হইনাছিল। সেই প্ৰসঙ্গে সান্দাবাবু তাঁহাকে যে-পত্ৰখানি লেখেন তাহাৰ কিয়দংশ এই — আপনাৰ যত্নে ও গুণে কেবল আমিহি যে উন্নত হইয়াছি এমন নহে, আপনি

বাহাদুরীমাত্ৰেবই গৌৰবেন স্থান এবং বাহাদুরীমাত্ৰেই আপনাব নিবট কৃতত্বতাপাশে বদ্ধ। আপনাব বিদ্যা, বুদ্ধি ও ন্যায়পৰতাই উকীলদিগেৰ উপৰ স্যাব ত্ৰ্যাংগিসেৰ শ্ৰদ্ধাৰ ভিত্তি। আপনাব মত্ৰ সেই শ্ৰদ্ধাৰ বিকাশ হইয়াছে। ইহাতে গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট 'ও স্যাব ত্ৰ্যাংগিস আশাদেৰ সন্মানেৰ বন্যাদাৰ্হ। কিন্তু যিনি প্ৰকৃত বন্যাদাৰ্হ, তাহান বখা কেহ নান দৰে না। তিনি একপ নিস্পৃহভাৱে নিজেৰ গুণ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰেন, এবং একপ অপ্রবাসিতভাবে বৰ্ণক্ষেত্ৰে বৰ্ণ কৰেন নে, বিশেষ প্ৰাধিকান দিয়া না দেখিলে তাহান কিছুই জানা যায় না।'

বিচাৰাসন পৰিত্যাগেৰ পৰ হাইকোৰ্টেৰ উৰীলগণ নিজেদেৰ মন্ত্য চাদা তুনিয়া তাহান একটী তৈলচিত্ৰ প্ৰস্তুত কৰান। প্ৰধান বিচাৰপতি Sir Francis Maclean উহাৰ আদৰ্শ উন্মোচন কৰেন। তিনি যখন আবৰণেৰ খিৰংটি টানিলেন, উহা বাৰ্য্য বৰিন না। তখন তিনি বলিলেন, “ইহা ঠিক স্যাব গুৰুদাসেৰ ন্যায়ই হইয়াছে, বানগ তিনি সৰ্বদা অস্ত্ৰাৱে খাদিয়া বৰ্ন কৰিতে ইচ্ছা কৰিতেন।’

তাঁহাৰ উক্তকপ ইচ্ছা মহাপ্ৰমাণবালেও পৰিলক্ষিত হইয়াছিল। তিনি বলিলেন ‘বাৰ্ত্তন কৰিয়া এবং অনেক লোব একত্ৰ কৰিয়া আশাবে ‘সন্মানে লইয়া’ নাইও না। আমি নানিদেৰভাৱে বাটীতে একটী পৰ্ণকুটীবেৰ এৰাংগে ভূমিষ্ট হইয়াছিলান। যে-ভাৱে আসিয়াছিলান সেই-ভাৱে যাইতে ইচ্ছা কৰি।’ ভগবান্ তাঁহাৰ এই ইচ্ছা পূৰ্ণ বৰিয়াছিলেন। ১৯১৮ খৃষ্টাব্দে ২৯ ডিচেম্বৰ সোমবাৰ প্ৰায় বাক্তি ১১টা পৰ্বত চতুৰ্দশী তিথি ছিল, তাহান পৰ অনাবস্যা পড়িল। ইহান অনেনসংগ পূৰ্ব হইতে তিনি একাত্ৰচিত্তে ভগবচিহ্নতা বৰিতেছিলেন। অনাবস্যা পড়িবান বিগৎসংগ পৰেই অতি ক্ষীণস্বৰে “ও তৎ সৎ” উচ্চাৰণ কৰিয়া দেহত্যাগ কৰিলেন। গীতাৰ ভগবান্ বলিয়াছেন “অন্তকালে চ মামেৰ স্মৰন্ মুক্তা কলেববন্। যঃ প্ৰযাতি স সন্তাবং যাতি নাস্ত্যত্ৰ সংশয়ঃ ॥’ (৮।৫)। “ওমিত্যেকাক্ষৰং ব্ৰহ্ম ব্যাহবন্ মামনুস্মবন্। যঃ প্ৰযাতি ত্যজন্ দেহং স যাতি পৰাং গতিম্ ॥” (৮।১৩)। অনাবস্যাৰ দেহত্যাগ অতিশয় সৌভাগ্যসূচক বলিয়া শাস্ত্ৰে বখিত হইয়াছে। একপ স্থলে বাৰ্ষিক শ্ৰাদ্ধ মাতামহপক্ষ-বজিত পাৰ্বণ-বিবানে বৰিতে হয়। সেইজন্য গুৰুদাসেৰ সাংবৎসৰিক শ্ৰাদ্ধে তাঁহাৰ পিতা এবং পিতামহেৰও শ্ৰাদ্ধ কৰিতে হয়। ইহাবে পঞ্চপাত্ৰ শ্ৰাদ্ধ বৰে।

SELECTIONS FROM SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

CONVOCATION ADDRESS

1890

In obedience to your Excellency's command and to a time-honoured custom, I rise now to address the Convocation. At the same time I cannot help expressing my regret that His Excellency, in giving me an opportunity of addressing you, has deprived you of the opportunity of listening at greater length to one of those speeches which profound scholarship and powerful eloquence can entertain an audience with. And I feel the regret all the more because the past year has been a notable one in the history of this University, and the matters to which I shall have to refer in reviewing the events of that year require for their full and clear elucidation ability

very much superior to mine own. As, however, I shall presently have to impress upon a large section of my audience the necessity of contentment with our situation, I must not myself set an example the other way, but I must proceed at once, and cheerfully to do my duty as best I can, asking you only to moderate your expectations, so that disappointment may not be your share

My first duty should be to thank your Excellency for the very kind words you have said of me, and to thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the evident marks of kindness towards me with which you have received those words

A brief retrospect of the past, and a probable view of the immediate future, of this University would be all that I should touch upon, with occasional interposition of such remarks, as may occur to one who has, for the last few years, had some experience of its practical working. An address of which this is the summary may not promise to be more interesting than the monotonous ceremony you have been witnessing for the last hour or so. But if you bear in mind that the several hundreds of young men who have just taken their degrees represent the cream of the intelligence of the rising generation, and will be sure to influence in a variety of ways, the future of a great province, the machinery by which such vast potential energy is stored up will not fail to interest you, and you will not, I am sure, grudge to give me another hour to dwell upon its working, its merits, and its defects

It is now nearly a third of a century since this University was established, and it commenced its existence as an examining body with the modest number of 244 candidates for matriculation. The number rose to very nearly six thousand last year, or had increased about twenty-five fold. At the first B A Examination, held in 1858 there were only 13 candidates, and the corresponding number last year was 1,165; that is, it had increased more than eighty-fold. Nor were these increases in the last year's numbers sudden and therefore probably attributable to exceptional causes. Barring very slight occasional fluctuations, this increase has been gradual and steady, and it indicates a rate of growth unknown anywhere except within the tropics. And when we remember the fact that this steady increase in numbers has been unaffected by the establishment of the sister Universities of Lahore and Allahabad, it

really affords matter for congratulation. It shews that the desire for University education has taken such deep root in this country, that any additional supply of facility for its acquisition readily creates and is absorbed by a growing demand for it.

There has been a similar steady increase in the number of candidates for the degree of Bachelor in Law. In the other two special Faculties of Medicine and Engineering, the examinations have not been so attractive, though there has not been any decided falling off in the number of candidates. This difference has, I think, been due partly to the difficulties attending the preparatory training to be undergone by candidates for examination in these Faculties, partly to the difficulties of the examinations themselves, and partly to the want of sufficiently encouraging prospects for passed candidates. The recent changes in the Regulations in Medicine, by which the examination in preliminary and subsidiary subjects, like Chemistry and Botany, has been separated from that in the Medical subjects proper, would, it is believed, remove some of these difficulties, so far as the medical examinations are concerned, without lowering their standard in any way.

But though, judging from the number of candidates, who present themselves at our examinations, we may find reason for congratulation, have the results of those examinations been equally satisfactory? In other words, does a fair proportion of the candidates come out successful? And are their University distinctions any warrant of their possessing solid attainments or at least attainments similar to those possessed by the holders of corresponding distinctions in other Universities? These questions deserve some attention.

Until very recently, the percentage of failures at our examinations used, roughly speaking, to range between 40 and 60, which very nearly agree with the corresponding limits at the examinations of the London University, which we have adopted as our model. This state of things, though not as satisfactory as might be desired, passed without comment. In the last year's Arts Examinations, however, the percentage of failures rose above 70 at the Entrance, and it was high at all the examinations. These apparently unexpected results naturally evoked much discussion. There came from various quarters a good deal of thoughtful criticism and

sensible suggestion, and also a mass of thoughtless talk and senseless abuse. In thus speaking rather unceremoniously of our critics, I am not at all speaking in anger or defiance, but am simply stating a plain fact. Nor have I any reason to be intolerant of criticism. I am not one of those who think that our University system is perfect, and does not admit of improvement. On the contrary, I firmly believe that with honest intentions and earnest exertions, we can always progress from good to better, and that free and fair criticism is one of our best guides in the path of progress. Only I would gently remind our critics that when they have to find fault with an institution like this University, which is earnestly striving to do good work, they ought not to cry it down in language calculated to bring it into ridicule, and to undermine in infant minds the foundations of respect for authority. Unjust failure at an examination may defer for a year the progress of those who have suffered, the wrong done, having every chance of being set right in the year following; but if they are taught to glory in their failure, and to despise examinations and examining bodies, depend upon it that the habits of laziness and irreverence that this will engender, will be sure to mar their prospects for ever.

The Senate has appointed a Committee to inquire into the causes of these large failures, and as the Committee has not yet submitted its report, it would be premature for me to hazard any opinion on the subject. One thing, however, I may say, as it is not any matter of opinion, but is a fact, or rather the admission of a fact by those interested in denying it. In reply to the inquiries made by the Committee, the heads of the institutions which sent candidates to our examinations, have almost invariably admitted with commendable candour that the candidates that were found fit to pass in their judgment, were not much larger in number than those who have actually passed, though some have stated that, between the date of application of candidates and the date of examination, many candidates were expected to be able to make up their deficiency. The results, therefore, were not altogether unexpected by those who knew best.

But whether expected or unexpected, these large percentages of failures indicate an amount of waste of time, energy, and money which the University ought to prevent, if possible. These large

failures may be due either to the standards being difficult, or to the examinations being unfair, or the candidates being badly prepared. Very few persons, however, seriously complain of the standards being too difficult, and opinion seems to be divided between attributing the failures to unfair examination and to bad preparation.

Now the University has of late been trying its best to make the examinations as fair as possible, that is, as exact and efficient tests as could be had of sound intelligent knowledge as distinguished from superficial cram. And there is no use in ignoring the fact that the more successful this effort on our part is, the greater will be the difficulty in the way of indifferent students who unfortunately form the majority and who try to pass by cramming. To remedy the evil without lowering the standards of our examinations, the only remedy, therefore, seems to be to improve the teaching in our schools and colleges. In saying this, I am far from intending to find fault with our teachers and professors. I know the difficulties of their situation, and I fully sympathise with them, for I myself began life as a professor. The defect I am now going to notice in the present system of teaching, is to some extent unavoidable from the nature of things. Owing to the inconveniently large size attained by classes in our schools and colleges, teaching is conducted almost exclusively by lectures, and exercises are as a rule neglected. Now, however lucid and impressive lectures may be, and however useful they may be in giving comprehensive views of subjects, they are wholly insufficient to enable the students to master details, unless they are supplemented by regular exercises. You can no more improve the mind by merely stuffing it with information, without giving it exercise, than you can improve the body by mere feeding without physical training. I would, therefore, earnestly impress on our school and college authorities the absolute necessity of regular exercises. I would also ask them to take an enlarged and liberal view of their duties and responsibilities. They have undertaken the work of educating young men. That work is not done by merely enabling our students to pass examinations or to secure good places in the Honour list, nor even is it done by storing their minds with information. The primary function of education is to train the mind and to develop

its powers, so as to qualify students for the higher trials they have to undergo when they enter the world,—to equip them so as to help them in the battle of life. Now, unless the mind is well trained, and its powers strengthened, its very equipment of knowledge may prove a burden rather than a benefit.

While my colleagues in the Senate will do, as they have always been endeavouring to do, all in their power to free our examinations of every thing that is found objectionable, the institutions that send up candidates to those examinations, should help us by making the education they profess to impart really worthy of the name.

Turning now to the question whether our University Degrees are any warrant of solid attainments in our graduates, we find great diversity of opinion. Some say that our standards are sufficiently high, and our examinations sufficiently severe, others maintain quite the contrary view, while there are others again who hold that examinations, whether here or elsewhere, are no test of real merit at all. This third view has given rise to much learned controversy, which it is not my object here to take part in. Suffice it to say that the truth lies here, as in many similar instances, somewhere between the two extreme conflicting views. Examinations are useful as simple tests of merit. But they are not the only tests, nor should the passing of examinations be regarded as the sole object and ultimate aim of education. We should try to combine the advantages of examination and teaching; and, to make examination a real test of merit, the test should be applied only to those who have had a previous preparatory training under competent teachers. Now, our University, though often disparagingly styled a mere examining body, has never lost sight of this important principle. As a rule, it admits to its examinations above the Entrance, no candidate, who has not prosecuted a regular course of study in an affiliated institution, and steps have recently been taken to enforce strict obedience to this rule.

The standards of our examinations, if not exactly equal to those of corresponding examinations in English Universities, are not much inferior to them, and the degree of proficiency in the answers, which our University exacts, is higher than that required in most places. While a Senior Wrangler at Cambridge (we learn from a distinguished Senior Wrangler and experienced teacher)

generally obtains not more than half the full number of the marks, our M.A. and B.A. Honour candidates must obtain 60 per cent of the marks to be placed in the first class. It should also be remembered that our graduates have to acquire knowledge through the medium of a difficult foreign language, in which itself up to the B.A. Examination they are required to attain a certain amount of proficiency. And if the learning of a difficult language implies mental training of a certain degree, our graduates have invariably the benefit of that training. We have been steadily raising the standards of our examinations, and I am happy to be able to say that, notwithstanding some difference of views regarding the Entrance Examination, there is an unanimity of opinion that for the higher examinations this is what ought to be done.

But though our standards may be high, and our tests searching, the question is often asked by the adverse critic—What work have those men, who passed these tests, yet done in the fields of literature or science? I wish I could answer the question in the way in which it is desirable that it should be answered. I wish I could refer our critic to a long catalogue of literary and scientific achievements made by our graduates. But though we are not yet able to do so, I deny that the barrenness of results is at all due to any defect in our University system of education. The truth is that our graduates for the most part come from the poorer classes; they have to earn their livelihood, they find very little encouragement for labours in the fields of literature and science in the shape of fellowships and in other shapes in which such labours are elsewhere encouraged, while they find better prospects in other lines. Thus it has happened that the Subordinate Judicial and Executive Services, and the Legal and Medical professions have hitherto attracted our best graduates. But now there are indications of a different state of things following. The service and the professions have become overstocked. This, no doubt, is an evil in one sense for our educated young men, but out of evil cometh good, and this evil may not be without some attendant good. It may force our aspiring young men, disappointed in other quarters, to the more arduous and less remunerative labours in the fields of literature and science, and if at this fit juncture we are able to offer some slight inducement for these labours, great good may

result Talents for which a fellowship worth five hundred a month would not have been sufficient inducement ten or fifteen years ago, may now be readily engaged for half the amount or less. If the object commends itself, as I hope it will, to the illustrious successor of the founder of the only professorship in our University, no less noted for learning and enlightened liberality than his predecessor, and to other enlightened noble men, we may at no distant date hope to have fellowships sufficient in value and number to induce some of our best graduates to give up seeking for other employment, and to devote their time to literature and science, and if the fellowships be made tenable only upon condition of approved work being done, our graduates may be put in the way of contributing their share, however humble, to the advancement of learning

Whilst upon this topic, I ought not to leave wholly unnoticed those few fruits which our University education has already borne. I shall say nothing of the professional work of those who have betaken themselves to the learned professions, but confine myself to work purely of a literary or scientific character. I am happy to be able to say that the best living poet of Bengal, and the first and the best living Bengali writer of fiction, are both graduates of the Calcutta University, and they have enriched the literature of Bengal with all that the gorgeous magnificence of the East and the sombre grandeur of the West could contribute. If their labours, and the labours of those that have followed their footsteps, had been better known to our European friends, it might have helped to remove much of that reproach to which our graduates are subjected.

Nor must I omit to mention the labours of another distinguished graduate of this University, the learned and indefatigable Secretary to the Science Association. Aided, no doubt, by the enlightened liberality of his countrymen and the valuable co-operation of a distinguished foreigner, he has done all that could be expected to lay the foundation for the study of science. If he has made no scientific discoveries, it is because he has been less selfish than he might have been. He has not occupied any limited ground, and concentrated his intelligence and energy therein, to enable himself to make any contributions to science. He has attempted

to clear up much larger ground, ground sufficient for the cultivation of science by himself and his countrymen, and this he has to some extent succeeded in doing. It is time now for his countrymen, to invest more of their pecuniary and intellectual capital in the enterprise and the prospect of a fair harvest will not be far distant. In the abstruse regions of mathematics, a distinguished young graduate has commenced work, and has already given fair earnest of a promising future.

Turning now from our students to the institutions that bring them up, we find the condition of things on the whole satisfactory. The number of schools that sent up candidates for the last Entrance Examination, was above 400. The number of colleges affiliated up to the B A. standard is 52, and the number of those affiliated only up to the F A standard is 32. These numbers have been steadily increasing, and if the existence of several rival institutions in one and the same place has occasionally led to breach of discipline, instances of such breach have always been taken serious notice of by this University. It may not be out of place here to suggest to managers and professors of neighbouring institutions the desirability of their forming themselves into friendly societies, and of holding conferences from time to time for the interchange of views upon educational matters. This will tend to put down unhealthy competition, to promote discipline, and to foster neighbourly feeling between rival institutions.

Our pecuniary resources continue increasing with the increase in the number of candidates for our examinations; but very soon there must be a large drain upon our funds. This splendid hall, large enough though it be to render my voice, notwithstanding my utmost efforts to make myself heard, inaudible at either end of it, has now been found wholly insufficient to meet our growing wants. We require additional accommodation for holding our examinations and for the storage of our records and furnitures. To our list of endowments very little addition has been made during the year under review. There have been only two small endowments made for the award of annual prizes. As to one of these, I shall say nothing, touching the other, I have one brief observation to make. The endowment is a small one, and may not benefit many, but it teaches an excellent lesson which every student should

profit by. The donor, the well-known Pundit Mahamahopadhyay Mohesh Chunder Nyayaratna, has desired the prize founded to be known not after his own name, though dear to Oriental learning, but after the name of his preceptor, the late Pundit Jaynarayan Tarkapanchanan. Examples of such reverence for one's teacher are well worthy of imitation.

During the year under review we lost by death or retirement eleven of our colleagues in the Senate; and this brief retrospect of the past would be incomplete if I were not to record our deep sense of regret for that loss. To some of these gentlemen our University is largely indebted. Mr Reynolds, as President of the Faculty of Arts, as Vice-Chancellor and as a member of many important Committees, always gave the University the full benefit of his vast and varied learning; and the eloquent words of his Convocation address may still be fresh in the memory of many. Mr. Westland, though his official duties left him little time to take any active part in our proceedings, always felt a warm interest in the welfare of the University, and gave every consideration to the claims of our graduates in the bestowal of the extensive patronage in his hands. In Moulvie Kabiruddeen Arabic learning has lost an ornament and the Senate a most useful member. Mr Anandaram Baruah was a distinguished graduate of this University and a no less distinguished member of the Civil Service. Amidst the engrossing duties of his office, he could find time to plan and partly to execute literary works of profound scholarship, and it is matter of no small regret that untimely death prevented him from completing them. His life ought to be a noble example to the graduates of this University. I cannot close this list without giving our tribute of respect to the memory of the Rev Mr Smith, the popular Principal of the General Assembly's Institution, who always took a leading part in the work of the University, and shewed a most sympathetic concern in the well-being of its graduates.

To keep up the strength of the Senate and to confer on deserving persons the distinction of Fellowship, new appointments have been made every year. But of late, the practice has been not to appoint more members than there are vacancies, the existing number of members being considered too large for a working body.

Naturally enough the distinction is greatly prized by the graduates of the University. If they value it, they should earn it for themselves by attaining eminence in learning.

I must here express my best thanks to His Excellency for publicly announcing that he will give the M A s of the University some voice in the election of Fellows. The privilege thus accorded will mark a new era in the history of our University, and will, I venture to hope, form the first rudiments of its elective franchise.

There is one other educational question discussed during the past year upon which I ought to say a few words, I mean the question of moral education. From its paramount importance it has naturally attracted great attention, and from the difficulties attending its solution, it has given rise to much discussion and difference of opinion. Owing to the intimate connection between morality and religion on the one hand, and to the necessity of observing religious neutrality on the other, systematic moral education has been considered impracticable. At the same time, it cannot for one moment be denied that if the object of education is not only to enable the student to pass examinations and win prizes, but is to make him a useful member of society, mere intellectual education is a most incomplete education. It has often happened that brilliant intellectual gifts have been frittered away, or, what is worse, applied to mischievous ends, while comparatively moderate talents, aided by honesty of purpose and strength of character, have achieved great and good results. The truth is that sharp intelligence without sound moral nature can no more make a useful man, than fine implements can carve a beautiful image out of rotten wood.

But if moral education is so necessary, how is it to be given? I think the difficulties in our way, though great, are not insurmountable. Happily for man, the cardinal truths of morality are well known, easily intelligible, and well recognized. The difficulty lies not in knowing them in theory, but in following them in practice, and to meet this difficulty, example is no doubt infinitely more efficacious than precept.

If then we follow the plan recently adopted by the University in regard to the Entrance course in English, and in prescribing the course in literature, select pieces which illustrate the beauties

and excellences not only of style but also of character, and if the teacher dwells not only upon the grammatical and philological points, but also upon the moral lessons taught by each piece, we may have a fairly efficient substitute for systematic moral education. This plan may, perhaps, to some extent interfere with the teaching of languages, but the advantage, gained will outweigh the apprehended disadvantage.

A great deal, however, will depend on the personal influence and example of the teacher. Arnold has done for Rugby more than a library full of moral text-books could do; and the same must be the case everywhere. As the result of my own limited experience in the teaching line, and of the knowledge which I presume to think I possess of the character of my countrymen, I would venture to make one or two observations as to the most efficacious mode of exercising that influence. I am fully conscious that I am speaking in the presence of many able and veteran teachers, and I speak with becoming diffidence. The teacher should use as little force and should excite as little fear as possible. Locke has truly said " 'Tis as impossible to draw fair and regular characters on a trembling mind as on a shaking paper " Everything that may lead the pupil to regard his teacher as an enemy rather than a friend, necessarily reduces the efficiency of his teaching. Many a good lesson instead of being readily imbibed, is repelled by the unwilling mind, and the antagonistic mood of the pupil. If punishment in any shape has to be inflicted, let it be in sorrow and not in anger, and if this is known, the young culprit will seldom be found to be such a hardened sinner as not to repent at once and mend his ways. I do not think I am reckoning too much upon the pupil's reverence for his teacher. With all his faults the Indian youth's respect for his teacher is unbounded.

I must not be understood here as pleading for leniency towards faults. On the contrary, I would insist upon every fault, however slight, being taken notice of with displeasure, so that habits of transgression may not grow up. To overlook light faults until graver ones are committed would be to allow the disease to grow until it is too late to cure.

Before I conclude, I ought to say a few words by way of encouragement and advice to my young friends who have just taken

their degrees. My first advice to you will be to aim at thoroughness in all that you do. This is the advice that my predecessor in office gave you two years ago in his usually impressive and forcible language. Thoroughness is the great secret of success in most cases. A distinguished Senior Wrangler, and afterwards an eminent Judge, Chief Baron Pollock, in one of his letters to Professor De Morgan, writes—"I have no doubt I have read less and seen fewer books than any Senior Wrangler of about my time or any period since, but what I knew I knew thoroughly, and it was at my fingers' ends." And if you could question other eminent and successful men, you would learn that their eminence and success were in a great measure due to their habits of thoroughness.

I would next advise you to show moderation and to avoid friction in whatever you do. Friction never advances but always impedes work; while moderation, by holding in reserve all surplus force, imperceptibly adds strength to your position.

I must earnestly impress upon you the absolute necessity of contentment with your situation, be it high or low, if you want to be happy. With all my wish to see your best dreams realised, I must say that that happy result can be the lot of only a very few, if any. The rest must go on toiling amidst disappointments. And even those few who may attain the objects of their desire, will find that when attained, they are not half so charming as they looked from a distance.

Nor must you complain that because the prizes of life are so few, and notwithstanding your education, so difficult to attain, education has been a useless trouble. Even if you are not able to secure a good appointment, or to earn a decent income by the practice of one of the learned professions, you are none the wiser for your education. If it has been worth any thing, it must have strengthened your mind, refined your taste, and expanded your imagination, so as to enable you to say with supreme indifference—

"I care not, Fortune, what you me deny,
 You cannot bar me of free Nature's grace;
 You cannot shut the wonders of the sky
 Through which Aurora shews her brightening face,"

Or if it has not taught you to soar to those sublime heights of fancy, even in the prosaic vale of ordinary real life, your education will stand you in good stead

With the knowledge you must have acquired that it is useless to struggle against the inevitable, you will be able to bear with calmness many a reverse at which the ignorant must bitterly fret and whine. To improve your condition you can avail yourselves of ways and means unknown and inaccessible to the uneducated.

The truth is not that you have no good prospects in life, but that your prospects have been thrown at a distance by reason of those who came to the scene earlier having occupied the vantage ground. You must, therefore, work harder and rise higher to attain what they have secured with far less labour.

If service and the liberal professions have no room for you, there are the vast material resources of the country which your scientific knowledge can enable you to utilize. There are the fields of literature and science scarcely trodden yet by our countrymen—fields the cultivation of which, if it requires patient and arduous toil, promises a proportionately rich harvest. You can enrich the vernacular literature of your country with all that is valuable in Western learning, and contribute to the literature of the West the precious treasures that lie hidden in your classic fields, and this literary traffic will be sure to yield adequate return. Then, again, there is the extensive field of education, which, though occupied, has room enough for a host of workers yet.

In these and other ways you can turn your education to useful account. But whatever line of work you may adopt, and whatever aims and aspirations you may have, always keep to one great cardinal aim. Ardently aspire and sedulously strive after true moral and intellectual greatness, and depend upon it, all your other legitimate aims and aspirations will be crowned with success.

CONVOCATION ADDRESS

1891

YOUR EXCELLENCY, SIR CHARLES ELLIOT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The year that has just gone by has not been without incidents worthy of notice on this occasion. To some of these I shall briefly

allude, before I turn my attention to matters which concern us in the present and the near future

Foremost among the incidents of the year under review, I should mention the recognition of the elective principle in the appointment of Fellows. Under the law as it now stands the right to appoint Fellows is vested in the Governor-General of India in Council; and His Excellency the Chancellor, in accordance with the views expressed in his last Convocation speech, was graciously pleased to invite the M.A.'s and holders of corresponding Degrees in the other Faculties, to choose from among themselves two gentlemen whom they would recommend for appointment as Fellows, the number two being about a third of the total number of Fellows then considered likely to be appointed. The graduates, who naturally prized the privilege, evinced a lively interest in the election that was held at the Senate House on the 1st of January, 1891, and I am happy to be able to say that their choice has met with the approval of His Excellency the Chancellor. You will be delighted to hear that among the electors present on this occasion was the distinguished lady graduate who is now the Superintendent of the Bethune College, and so, under the guidance of the enlightened scholar and statesman now at the head of our affairs, our University has had the high honour of being the first institution in the East where female suffrage has been recognised. As a graduate of this University, it is peculiarly gratifying to me that I should have the privilege of thus publicly expressing on behalf of the graduates our most heartfelt thanks to His Excellency for this act of grace, and the pleasure of congratulating the electors and the elected, and of welcoming our first elected Fellows. The 1st of January, 1891, will be a memorable day in the history of the University, and we may hope that the principle of representation will be recognised in its constitution as fully and definitely as sound policy and right reason will allow.

In close connection with this topic, I should notice the recent resolution of the Senate to apply to the Legislature for the amendment of our Act of Incorporation so as to allow the graduates the right to nominate one-half of the number of Fellows to be appointed every year, and to enlarge the scope of the University by removing the restriction which makes it at present a mere examining body.

Of this application it is not for me now to say more than this, that the recommendations of the Senate proceed for the most part upon the lines on which the Allahabad University Act is based, and that the metropolitan University may well hope to have as liberal a constitution and as free a scope as her younger provincial sister has already been favoured with.

Another measure carried out last year, which is of importance to us as an examining body, deserves here a passing notice. The Syndicate has formally adopted the rule that no one shall be appointed to set questions on any subject of which he teaches the whole or a part. The rule is not meant to imply in the least degree any slur on the integrity of our examiners. It will relieve the public mind from all possible apprehension that one class of candidates may have any undue advantage over another. It is intended also to relieve the examinees from an embarrassing conflict of duties. If one is to do his duty as an examiner properly, he should be left free to set his questions so that they may afford the best means of testing knowledge, but if he has been teaching the subject, it becomes equally his duty to select the questions so that his own pupils may not, from their acquaintance with his views respecting it, have an unfair advantage over other candidates, and these duties it is often difficult to reconcile. An eminent professor and experienced examiner at Cambridge expresses his surprise that the necessity and the reason for such a regulation should be overlooked or denied.

I shall not detain you with any account of the other measures carried out by the University during the past year, as they relate mostly to matters of detail and not of principle in our modes of conducting examinations. These matters of detail, and our relations with our affiliated institutions are giving us long seasons of work with comparatively short seasons of rest and with occasional seasons of storm. Happily, however, the storms have soon subsided, and been succeeded by refreshing calms. Like storms in the physical world, they have served to sweep away all that was noxious and unwholesome in our moral atmosphere, but unlike their material types they have left no marks of harm in their track behind.

During the year under review, we have lost by death or retirement certain of our Fellows, to some of whom at least the ordinary tribute of respect is undoubtedly due.

Sir Steuart Bayley, though the duties of his high office left him little time to take part in our proceedings, always evinced a warm interest in the moral and intellectual progress of the people of these provinces, and gave encouragement to our graduates whenever suitable opportunity arose, and on a recent occasion, he rendered the University very valuable assistance by sanctioning an arrangement in the Education Department, which enables us to avail ourselves of the most useful services of the present officiating Registrar

Mahamahopadhyay Bapudev Sastri, owing to his residence in the North-West was, it may be said, no more than an ornamental Fellow of this University, but his name really adorned our Fellows' list. In him we had a rare combination of profound ancient Oriental learning in mathematics with the modern learning of the West in that abstruse science.

In Babu Maheschandra Chaudhuri, the Senate has lost a most useful member, and our society a rare man. He was a member of the Syndicate for two years, and amidst his numerous professional, and other engagements, he always found time to discharge his duties here with that conscientious thoroughness which characterised all that he did. His sound common sense, his untiring energy and his spotless character should make him a bright example unto all.

Nor must I omit to mention here the name of one who, though he left India twenty years ago, and from that time ceased to be Fellow of this University, is still remembered with all the respect that used to be shewn to him when he was Chief Justice of Bengal and whose loss is mourned as deeply here as it is in his native land. Sir Barnes Peacock became an *ex-officio* Fellow when the University was established, and he held that office for upwards of ten years, during which time he took a lively interest in its affairs, and wrote some of those learned minutes which are worthy of careful study. The Native Bar owe him a deep debt of gratitude for the great encouragement and courtesy they met with from him. He bore very high testimony to their merit, and it was upon his authority that Sir Henry Maine in one of his Convocation speeches said that 'an average legal argument by native vakils in the Appellate High Court was quite up to the mark of an average legal argument in Westminster Hall.'

Our list of endowments has received three important additions during the past year, important, if not for their pecuniary value, certainly for the value that attaches to them for the honoured names with which they are associated. The endowments are made by the Keshub Chunder Sen, General Trevor, and Prasanna Kumar Sarbadhikary Memorial Committees. The prizes and medals founded may not be competed for by many, and can be attainable only by a few, but the saintly life of Keshub Chunder, the distinguished public career of General Trevor and the varied scholarship of Prasanna Kumar, the memory of which they serve to recall, are examples that must produce in every generous heart a yearning after what is good and great.

Turning now from the past to matters that concern our present and immediate future, we find that our University has now lived full one-third of a century, having completed almost to a day thirty-four years of its existence. This, though nearly half the average span of human life, is no doubt only a small period in the life of an institution. Still, as it has lived and thrived all this time, and now numbers its affiliated institutions by scores, and its graduates by thousands, reckoning among these last some worthy representatives of the fair sex, we may safely feel the pleasing assurance that it has outlived all those evils that threaten infantile existence, and has now entered vigorous life. But though we may be relieved from apprehensions of one kind, anxieties of a different sort begin to fill the mind. Has this University fulfilled our expectations? Is it doing all that it ought to accomplish? These are questions that must occur to every thoughtful observer, and they demand serious attention. Though primarily a mere examining body, the University by the courses of study and the rules of preparatory training prescribed for its examinations, and by the standard of excellence it exacts at those examinations, practically regulates the education of a vast province. The flower of our youthful population spend the best part of their time, and no small part of their generally scanty means, in preparing for our examinations, and it is matter of the gravest importance that we should so arrange things that that preparation should qualify them not only for the temporary trial in the examination hall, but also for the continued trial in life.

The friends of the University will at once say that the courses of study prescribed for our examinations and the standard of excellence exacted from our candidates are sufficiently high as compared with those of other Universities; and that candidates who do well at our examinations also do well in after-life. Our adverse critics on the other hand say that our standards may be high, but our examinations, and perhaps competitive examinations generally, are no test of real merit; and that in actual life, though some few of our graduates may do well, there are many again who are found to be absolutely helpless. But it will not be fair to judge of the merits of a system by referring either to exceptionally favourable or to exceptionally unfavourable specimens of its product. It is only by referring to the number of graduates the University has produced, and the quality of the average graduate, that we can form a fair estimate of the work done by the University. Now, though their average merit may not be rated very high, considering their number, and considering the powerful impetus that the University has given to education, we cannot have much reason to be dissatisfied. If amid the depths of ignorance around, the University has already been able to raise even a slightly elevated level of knowledge of fair extent, well may we hope that it will form the basis whereon, a stately superstructure will ere long be raised by the labour of the University aided by the funds supplied by enlightened liberality. But, whatever the merits of the present system may be, our business is to consider whether it is not capable of improvement in the future. Let us give this important matter a moment's thought.

Speaking broadly, the chief objects of education (I leave out of consideration physical education) are to store the mind with knowledge, and to train the intellect, the emotions, and the will to healthy and harmonious action.

Touching the first of these objects, the points that demand attention are, that the matter of the store should be really useful knowledge, and the manner of storing, methodical. For, the capacity of the human mind being limited, knowledge, that would be useless or superfluous in after-life, must make room for that which is necessary and useful; and we shall not be able to apply our stock of knowledge with that readiness which the exigencies

of life demand, if our mental store house is like an ill-arranged lumber room

Now, no objection has, so far as I am aware, been raised that the courses of study prescribed for our different examinations include anything but useful knowledge, though objection may be taken that they exclude certain branches of useful knowledge. I wish very much that every graduate of our University and every educated man had some knowledge of the structure and functions of the different parts of that wonderful piece of mechanism, whose regular working is a necessary condition for the acquisition of knowledge. Such knowledge by confirming our faith in the laws of nature, will be sure internally to influence our conduct for the better in many matters in which external interference, however benevolent, may prove irritating or powerless. I hope it would be possible to introduce elementary physiology into our general curriculum of studies without increasing very much the burden on our students. I also deem it not merely desirable, but necessary, that we should encourage the study of those Indian vernaculars that have a literature, by making them compulsory subjects of our examinations in conjunction with their kindred classical languages. The Bengali language has now a rich literature that is well worthy of study, and Urdu and Hindi are also progressing fairly in the same direction. In laying stress upon the importance of the study of our vernaculars, I am not led by any mere patriotic sentiment, excusable as such sentiment may be, but I am influenced by more substantial reasons. I firmly believe that we cannot have any thorough and extensive culture as a nation, unless knowledge is disseminated through our own vernaculars. Consider the lesson that the past teaches. The darkness of the Middle Ages of Europe was not completely dispelled until the light of knowledge shone through the medium of the numerous modern languages. So in India, notwithstanding the benign radiance of knowledge that has shone on the higher levels of our society through one of the clearest media that exist, the dark depths of ignorance all round will never be illumined until the light knowledge reaches the masses through the medium of their own vernaculars.

The question next arises, how should the prescribed subjects and text-books be studied. The golden rule here is, that whatever

is read should be thoroughly understood, but nothing more than the fundamental facts or truths in each branch of knowledge need be committed to memory. A pernicious practice has, I fear, been growing with our students preparing for the undergraduates examinations, of indiscriminately and unintelligently committing to memory the contents of their text-books. Such a practice should be put down by teachers, and it should be discouraged so far as possible by examiners by leaving out minute questions which can only test mechanical memory. Examination papers should not, as a rule, exact from candidates greater knowledge of minute details in any subject than they should be required to carry in their memory in after-life.

It is with reference to the latter of the two above-mentioned objects of education, the training of the intellect, the emotions and the will, that the strongest objections to our system are raised. Now, it must be freely admitted that ordinary examinations can afford no test of the culture of the emotions and the will, except so far as the prosecution of vigorous study which is essential to success at such examinations, implies a well-regulated moral nature. The only way in which a mere examining University like ours, as distinguished from a teaching University, can encourage and assist the cultivation of the emotions and the will is, by insisting upon regular preparatory training and discipline of a thorough and strict character as a necessary condition for appearing at its examinations. The framers of our Act of Incorporation must have fully perceived this, and accordingly they have provided in the Act that, as a rule, no one shall be admitted as a candidate for any of our Degrees, unless he produces a certificate that he has prosecuted a regular course of study in a recognised institution. It is very much to be regretted that the importance of such certificate is often not fully realized. It is generally supposed that the object of requiring this certificate is to obtain evidence of a candidate's intellectual fitness for an examination, and if that is its object, it is naturally considered a hardship that it should be strictly insisted upon, when the candidate is prepared to take the risk of failure, and when the examination to be undergone will be a sufficient test of fitness. But the real object of a systematic course of college discipline is to produce not mere intellectual

fitness, but also moral fitness, by training the emotions and the will, and by fostering habits of punctuality, patience, and perseverance. This was the object of that stern discipline and rigid self-denial, that *brahmacharya*, which our sages enjoin on the student, and the strict observance of which was the principal cause of that intellectual and moral greatness of ancient India which we still look back upon with pride. When once the real object of our rule for insisting on a systematic course of preparatory training is fully understood, our students who justly take pride in their character for obedience to law and authority as a national virtue, will, I am sure, be the foremost to carry out the rule scrupulously and in an ungrudging spirit.

We are often asked whether our examinations afford any good test even of intellectual merit. I do not deny that young men not possessing any solid knowledge or power of thinking may, with the help of mere mechanical memory, make a show of knowledge and come out successful at our examinations. But I deny that this is anything peculiar to our system of examination. The evil complained of is almost a necessary concomitant of competitive and qualifying examinations wherever they are held. We learn from eminent men of Oxford and Cambridge who have written on the subject, that the evil is just as prevalent in those great seats of learning as it is here. The truth is, that with the growing importance of examinations, there has grown up an art known by the unenviable name of cramming, the object of which is to enable students to pass examinations without possessing any solid knowledge and without spending much thought, though certainly not without spending much time and labour. The art is in high favour with lazy and indifferent students who think it easier to learn how to make a show of knowledge than to acquire knowledge—to appropriate the thoughts of others than to think for themselves. In this way examiners may be deceived, and the object of examinations frustrated. The question for us to consider is how to put down this evil. To my mind the only practical remedy appears to be to conduct our examinations so that students may perceive that cramming is neither necessary nor sufficient to ensure success.

Now, two things appear to me to have led students to consider cramming necessary—first, inordinately long examination papers,

and secondly, disproportionately difficult questions. I am fully aware of the reasons in favour of long papers and difficult questions—it is only by means of these that the qualities of readiness and acuteness can be tested. But, on the other hand, we must remember that if examination papers are so long that candidates must (to use the word of Dr. Whewell) “scribble in tempestuous haste” to answer them fully, or if they are so difficult that candidates left to their own resources are unable to answer them, they must have recourse to the kind of help that cramming gives to prepare themselves for their examinations. If you do not give them time to think in the examination hall, or if you demand from them thoughts beyond the reach of their powers, you cannot complain that they depend entirely upon memory, or borrow the thoughts of others without going through the process of thinking.

Again, if students find that the necessary qualifying marks may be obtained by the help of memory alone the less able and less ambitious among them will not find much inducement to go through the arduous process of exercising the reasoning faculty.

If we want to put down cramming, and encourage thought, we should then be careful not to set too long or too difficult papers, or papers in which the minimum pass marks are obtainable by the exercise of memory alone.

We should also discourage the taking up of too many Honour subjects by candidates for our examinations. We should aim at securing depth even at the expense of surface. There is more psychological truth than poetical fancy in Pope's well-known lines—

“One science only will one genius fit

So vast is art, so narrow human wit”

Whilst this seems to be almost all that we can do, our efforts in this direction in order to be effective, require the active co-operation of the teachers and professors of our affiliated institutions. They should always bear in mind that teaching should never be subordinated to examination, but that the purposes of examination are subordinate to those of teaching. They should impress on students the mischievous effects of cramming which involves waste of time and energy, without training the mind or imparting real knowledge. Our students should be exhorted not to allow

the distressing phantom of an impending examination to haunt them in their hours of study, but to read whatever they have to read thoughtfully and with the cheering assurance that they are thereby either training the mind or storing it with useful knowledge.

There is one other point connected with our system of education which deserves notice. As the learned professions and all departments of service, whether public or private, in which persons who have received a liberal as distinguished from a technical education can find employment, are getting daily more and more overstocked, some true friends of the country think that the kind of education which our University now encourages, cannot be regarded as useful for all those who are seeking it, and that it is time that the University should begin to recognise the necessity of technical education, and institute examinations and confer marks of distinction for its encouragement. I fully see the importance and necessity of technical education. In these days of keen competition and hard struggle for existence, unless we can utilize and improve the products of Nature, and unless our artisans are trained in the application of science to art, we can never hope for the material prosperity of the country. If, therefore, Government or enlightened private liberality should establish suitable institutions for imparting technical education, the University should feel no hesitation in encouraging it by introducing an alternative practical Entrance Examination, as was once suggested by a high authority, or by conferring marks of distinction on deserving persons educated in such institutions, or in such other modes as may be thought fit. Perhaps this would be beyond the scope of the University as limited by the present statute, but it may be hoped that this limitation on our scope will be removed.

But whilst saying so, I must not be understood for one moment to admit that liberal education has in this country reached anything like its saturation point, and that its further progress is not to be encouraged, or that an educated man will be any the less fitted by reason of his education to fill any station in life, however humble and however inferior to that generally occupied by men of his class it may be.

Turning now to my young friends who have just earned their well-merited marks of distinction, I must first of all heartily

congratulate our lady graduates in Arts for the high proficiency they have shown, one of them, Florence Holland, having obtained double first class Honours, that is, Honours in English and Latin and the other three having all obtained Honours in English. I should next offer my hearty congratulations to the lady graduates in Medicine for the proficiency they have attained in that noble science, and I am sure that the knowledge they have acquired will not only be useful to them, but will be of incalculable benefit to their secluded sisters in the zenana. The encouragement of female education by its degrees and other marks of distinction must rank as one of the highest useful functions of this University. No community can be said to be an educated community unless its female members are educated, that is, not simply taught to read and write, but educated in the true and full sense of the word. For, however proud man may boast of his intellectual superiority over the gentler sex, the simple truth must be admitted that woman is the primary educator of humanity. With the first dawn of reason, and before our baby lips even learn to lisp, our real education begins in the mother's arms, and every fond word she speaks and every anxious look she casts impresses silently but indelibly some lasting lesson on the growing mind. And what moralist is there that can better teach the cultivation of the finer feelings than a loving mother, a loving sister, a loving wife and a loving daughter? It is, therefore, that our Eastern mind, notwithstanding its supposed antipathy towards the fair sex, conceived the genius of learning to be a female divinity, and it is therefore that our sage law-giver *Manu*, notwithstanding the harshness to females which characterises archaic codes, has inculcated that memorable precept

‘ যত্র নারীস্তু পূজ্যতে কসেত তত্র দেবতাঃ ।

যত্রৈতাস্তু ন পূজ্যতে সৰ্ব্বা তত্রাকলা ক্রিয়া ॥ ’

“Where women are honoured, there the gods rejoice, where they are not honoured, there all rites are fruitless”

To the other graduates I must offer my congratulations generally, making special mention of two—Niratan Sarkar, an M.A. of the University, who has just taken the highest degree in Medicine, and Upendralal Majumdar, who has had an exceptionally brilliant career, having been the first man of his year in all our

Arts examinations, and who has now passed the highest of them and won our highest prize—the Premchand Roychand studentship. But while saying this I must earnestly remind each of them of the noble precept: “Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required”

I must next ask each one of you, my young friends, to remember this day as a solemn day in your life, a day of solemn resolve to carry out in letter and in spirit the injunction with which you have been admitted to your degrees. If your education justly qualifies you to fill important posts of honour, it at the same time imposes on you grave responsibilities, and you must shape your course of life so that you may discharge them with credit.

Your first duty as educated men is your duty to the learned world, to endeavour to add to our stock of knowledge, to which our graduates have up to this time contributed so little. When addressing you last year, I called attention to this point, and appealed to the enlightened liberality of my countrymen to endow Fellowships as an inducement to literary and scientific pursuits. If my feeble appeal has not yet been responded to, I do not despair; but I hope some future Vice-Chancellor with a more powerful voice may make a more effective appeal at no distant date. In the meantime, let me appeal to you, my fellow graduates, to supply the want. It was an article of faith with the priesthood of ancient India that every member of that learned community, from the moment of his birth, incurred three debts, one of which was his debt to the holy sages, that is, the republic of letters, to be repaid by the study of the Vedas, that is, the cultivation of learning. I hope I shall not be charged with my undue partiality to the traditions of my caste if I earnestly wish that a similar sentiment may animate you. I wish you will feel that you owe a duty to the University which gives you the first start in life, to do your best to add to her reputation for learning. And this duty becomes all the more imperative when you remember how poor your *Alma Mater* is in those treasures of learning, which are the just pride of her elder sisters in the West.

You must next remember that you come upon the world at a time when this great country with all her venerable institutions is passing through a mighty process of change. It is for you to

guide the current of progressive thought, so that renovation and not destruction may be its work

Do not despair because your own estimate of your worth is low. The high and the low, the mighty and the mean, can each be useful in his own way. If the towering precipice with its thundering cataract stands in solitary grandeur furnishing theme for sublime meditation to the gazers below, it is the lowly vale with its gentle streams that supplies the daily wants of life. Great things may be few and far above the reach of many, but good things there are in plenty which we always have the power to do, if only we have the will. And so rich, so sure is the reward of these deeds, that life will be fully worth all its troubles, if it is steadily devoted to the work of doing good.

You have spent some of the best years of your life in gaining knowledge, and meet it is that I should conclude by asking you to realise the highest aim of knowledge. That aim is to make you happy, not however by giving you all the objects of your desire, for they are neither all good nor all attainable; nor on the other hand, by quenching all your desires, for they are neither all bad nor all quenchable. True knowledge makes you happy by teaching you what the *Gita* has taught.

“ आपूर्यमानं अचलप्रतिष्ठं
 गनुजनापः प्रनिशति गदनम् ।
 तद्वन् काना वन् प्रनिशति गर्भं
 मशाटिगप्रति न वागकानी ॥ ’

Happy the man whose soul serene
 Lets in desires that ruffle it not,
 Even as the boundless sea receives
 Unmoved the streams that thither flow
 Not happy they that cravings crave

True knowledge makes you happy by teaching you the limits of your power, by teaching you how to work and advance well and steadily within those limits, and above all, by teaching you to submit with calm resignation to a Will that is inscrutable and supreme.

CONVOCATION ADDRESS

1892

Having had the honour of addressing the Convocation on two previous occasions, I wished very much this time to be a listener and not a speaker; but though that was my wish, a wish that was a command unto me, has assigned to me the present situation, and I must do my best to fulfil its obligations, after thanking His Excellency for the kind words he has been pleased to say of me, and thanking you for the evident marks of kindness to me, with which you have listened to those words.

Following the practice of former years, I shall venture to occupy for a few moments your time, if not also your attention with a brief retrospect of our past academic session. I shall then touch upon some of the important educational problems that are exercising the public mind, and I shall conclude with the usual words of congratulation and advice to those who have just obtained their degrees.

The doubt I have expressed as to my being able to engage your attention, implies no mistrust in your patience, wearied as you must have been with the protracted and monotonous ceremony you have been witnessing, it only indicates mistrust in my own power of arresting attention, and some mistrust also in the attractiveness of my subject, for amidst events of deep and mournful interest around, the incidents of the academic year under review were scarcely of a stirring character. But such as they were, they have been enough to keep us engaged, they occupied their due share of public attention; and they evoked criticisms, often severe but always instructive.

The number of candidates for our examinations in the past year was, I observe, less than the number in the year preceding. One cause of this is, I think, to be found in our own statistics. The successful candidates at the Entrance and F.A. examinations of 1889, who would in due course form respectively the majority of the candidates for the F.A. and B.A. examinations of 1891, were comparatively small in number, the year 1889 having been, as you will remember, a year of heavy failures, and the year 1890, which was one of fair average results, did not leave any unusually large residue of unsuccessful candidates to make up the deficiency.

Another circumstance, which may also partly account for this decrease, was the exercise of greater care and discrimination by the heads of institutions in sending up candidates for examination. So far as the falling off is due to this cause, it need not create much misgiving especially when our schools and colleges, which are the real source of our strength, are steadily increasing in number.

The question whether the growth of our educational institutions has not reached a point after which their further growth requires to be regulated and restrained, came up before the Senate last year, and is still under consideration

Some are of opinion that new schools and colleges should be recognized and affiliated irrespective of their effect on older institutions, and then free competition would lead to the survival of the fittest, while others maintain that if rival institutions opened for purposes of gain, but not required to satisfy any real want, are allowed to exist, they lead to unhealthy competition, injurious to the interests of discipline and sound education. There is some force in the argument on each side

Remembering that it is only a small fraction of the vast population of the country that shares the benefits of education, we must not too rigidly adhere to the principle that demand should precede supply, but should sometimes allow supply to anticipate and create demand as it not unfrequently does. But, on the other hand, it must be borne in mind that as in nine cases out of ten the customer here is not likely to be a competent judge of the commodity, free competition requires control to secure efficiency and usefulness

The subject involves conflicting considerations of some nicety, and much will always depend upon the good sense and discrimination of the controlling authority. We may hope that the question will be considered by the Senate in all its bearings, and a satisfactory solution will soon be arrived at.

The Regulations relating to the examinations in the several Faculties have undergone revision more or less during the past year

The changes in the Arts Regulations relate to matters of detail and not of principle, and so I shall not detain you with any notice of them.

The scheme of Law Studies has been carefully revised by a Committee consisting of a learned Judge of the High Court who is the President of the Faculty of Law, and of the Advocate-General, the Senior Government Pleader, one of the leading Attorneys, and two experienced Professors of Law representing the affiliated Law Colleges. A scheme thus prepared may well be accepted as including all that it is necessary to equip the young lawyer with, to qualify him for the responsible duties of his profession, and the B L degree will, I hope, continue to enjoy and deserve the recognition it has hitherto had, as a test of fitness for entering the profession or the judicial service.

In the Regulations in Medicine, an important change has been introduced requiring unsuccessful candidates to go through a fresh course of instruction in the subjects in which they are found deficient, before they are admitted to examination again. The rule is intended to secure that standard of proficiency which is necessary to be attained by those who must be entrusted with life and health.

The Regulations in Engineering have been referred for revision to the Faculty of Engineering, along with a letter from the Director of Public Instruction and a Resolution of the Government of Bengal recommending certain changes. One of these recommendations is to introduce an alternative course for Mining Engineers. The somewhat better prospects held out to graduates in Engineering in the Government Resolution just referred to, may, I hope, make our degrees in Engineering more attractive than they have hitherto been.

The privilege granted last year to the M.A.'s and holders of corresponding degrees in the other Faculties to elect two gentlemen from among themselves for appointment as Fellows, was again allowed by His Excellency the Chancellor to be exercised this year, and electors' resident in the mofussil were invited to take part in the election by signing their voting papers in the presence of a Magistrate. How greatly the privilege is valued is shown by the fact that out of about 900 Masters and Doctors whose names are on our rolls, no less than 641 took part in the election, and voting papers came from the most distant parts of the Empire. The voting resulted in the election of two well-known gentlemen,

Babu Prannath Pandit and Babu Upendranath Mitra, and I am glad to say that their election has met with the approval of His Excellency. To these and the other gentlemen who have been just appointed Fellows, I accord a most hearty welcome.

The result of the last election is a source of gratification to me, not only because it gives me a second time the pleasing occasion for congratulating my fellow-graduates on their success, but also because it gives us just ground for entertaining the hope that under the guidance of the enlightened statesman whose liberal mind devised the experiment, what was commenced as an experimental measure may at least become part of the recognised customary constitution of the University.

Whilst welcoming our new colleagues, I must not forget to pay the customary tribute of respect that is due to those whom we have lost during the past year. To some of them that tribute is due as a matter of something more than mere conventional formality.

Mr Downing was a member of the Faculty of Engineering and materially helped the Faculty in its deliberations on all important questions. As the head of the Seebpoore Engineering College, the only institution of its kind in Bengal, he had an active share in the training of our young men in a profession the importance of which is being realised more and more every day. At a time when the scheme of education in Engineering is about to undergo important alterations, the loss occasioned by his death must be greatly felt.

In Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra the University has lost one of its most distinguished members, and the learned world a scholar of rare attainments. His reputation was not confined to his own country, but his many and erudite works made his name well known wherever Oriental scholarship is prized and respected. In recognition of his profound learning the University conferred on him the Honorary Degree of Doctor in Law, and by honouring him has honoured itself. He took a leading part in the proceedings of the University, he always maintained his point with impressive eloquence and indomitable courage, and his weighty words of wit and wisdom will long be remembered in this hall.

Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was a Fellow of this University ever since its establishment in 1857. During its early

days he took an active interest in its progress, and though latterly, having in effect retired from public life, he ceased to attend our meetings, he has done the University and the cause of education lasting service by establishing the first affiliated private college under native management, which has served as a model for many others that have since come into existence. He was a great friend of female education, and a staunch advocate of woman's rights, and for the solid work he has done as an educationist, as a social reformer, and as a philanthropist, his country will ever remain deeply indebted to him. If Rajendra Lala's was a massive intellect stimulated by an ardent desire for knowledge, Vidyasagar's was a generous heart and a resolute will impelled to action by an overflowing love for humanity. The lives of these two eminent men as representing two great types of character, are worthy of careful study by those who long for intellectual and moral greatness.

In Pandit Adjudhya Nath we have lost another distinguished colleague, a man 'of whom' as the Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University has justly remarked, 'any country and any race might be proud'. His numerous professional and other engagements in the North-West left him little time, it is true, to take any active share in our work, but his warm sympathy for our educated young men in all their hopes and aspirations, and his earnest exertions and immense self-sacrifice to promote the good of his country, made him loved and respected by the educated classes all over India, and Bengal mourns his loss as deeply as his native province.

There is yet another and a very much heavier loss which we have to mourn,—a loss that grieves not this country alone but has plunged in deep sorrow the whole empire of Britain,—the loss not of a colleague but of a Prince who in the natural order of things would have been our future Ruler; and who had endeared himself so much to the people of this country by his recent visit. While this melancholy event is so fresh in our memory, we cannot take part in a public ceremony like this, without a respectful expression of our profound sorrow for the loss, and of our heartfelt loyal sympathy for our beloved Sovereign, to whose beneficent rule we owe the blessing of that liberal education which this University has been established to promote.

I shall now, as I proposed at the outset, touch upon one or two of the educational problems that pressingly demand solution.

It is said, not without some truth, that the University is turning out graduates and under-graduates in much larger numbers than can find suitable employment, and that whilst the education that it encourages is so ill-remunerative, the cost of time and energy that preparation for its examinations demands is disproportionately high. The question therefore presses upon us, how to regulate our courses of study so as to ensure the greatest usefulness and occasion the least loss of time and energy to the student.

As regards the courses of study prescribed for examinations in the special Faculties of Law and Medicine, it is not easy to see what useful change the University can introduce. These courses have been settled by distinguished members of the respective professions with due regard to their usefulness for the careers for which they are intended to train our graduates, and considering the grave responsibilities to be undertaken, they cannot be said to be too exacting in their demand upon the time and attention of the student. If skilled labour in these professions does not find sufficient work or adequate remuneration, the law of supply and demand must be left to bring about the necessary economic equilibrium.

The case, however, is somewhat different with regard to our course of study in Engineering. Here it is, I think, possible for the University to introduce changes for the better. Though a well-qualified body of legal or medical practitioners can create no new work for themselves, unless it be by making people over-sensitive about their legal rights or health—a state of things not very desirable in itself—a body of Engineers or persons duly trained in those branches of science and art which will enable them to develop the material resources of the country, can create work for themselves and wealth for others.

But even here the University unaided can do very little. It may prescribe courses of study and institute examinations in Mining Engineering or Agriculture or other similar subjects; but unless there are colleges established competent to give a thorough and efficient theoretical and practical training in those subjects, the prescribed courses of study can never be profitably pursued, and the examinations creditably passed.

But how are we to have such a college established? It must be a long time before private liberality, which is taxed in so many ways, can be expected to endow an institution of this sort. Though I am extremely reluctant to ask my countrymen to invoke the aid of Government where they can help it, in the present instance I must say we cannot do without such aid. We ought therefore to be deeply thankful to Sir Charles Elliott for the views expressed by him in the Resolution already alluded to, where he says "He considers that the increase of the number of young men trained to engineering pursuits and qualified by their training to develop the resources of the province, is an object on which he is justified in incurring large outlay, since he is confident that all such outlay will be fully reproductive."

The policy indicated in this Resolution regarding the training of our young men in Engineering and Agriculture will, if fully carried out, as I confidently hope it will be, mark a new era in the educational and the general progress of the country, and the dreams of gold of which we recently heard so much, will be realised though in a somewhat different shape.

In the courses of study prescribed for our Arts examinations I think it is not only desirable, but absolutely necessary, to introduce certain changes, and I am glad to say that the attention of the University has already been drawn in this direction.

Our Entrance examination every year attracts several thousands of candidates, of whom only a small number intend to pursue their studies in Arts any further, the rest being anxious to pass the examination to qualify themselves for some occupation for which an Entrance certificate is considered a necessary or a desirable recommendation. It would therefore be ignoring the case of this large body of candidates if the Entrance course is prescribed only with a view to train students for entering the University. It may no doubt be said that those who do not intend to enter the University need not come up for the Entrance examination. But the passing of this examination implies a certain well recognised educational and even social position, which has made the examination so attractive, and in the interests of education and progress, we ought to do our best to foster the generous ambition which even the intending cultivator or mechanic feels to be an

undergraduate of the University. Considering, however, the great diversity of careers for which the Entrance examination will have to prepare the students, if it is to be organised for such a comprehensive object, the prescribed course of study must consist of a large number of alternative subjects, each being suited for a particular career, but every one of them ensuring a certain amount of mental training. If such a scheme is judiciously devised, it will qualify our under-graduates not only for literary and scientific careers, but also for industrial and commercial pursuits—a thing that is very much needed, to remove the block caused by overcrowding in their avenues to employment.

The movement recently set on foot to reconcile sea voyages with Hindu orthodoxy may, if it succeeds, stimulate commercial activity and enterprise, and thereby open out fresh fields of employment for our educated young men.

I have hitherto been dealing with the question of the usefulness of our University education solely with reference to economic considerations, which no doubt claim precedence over all others. But though to enable us to supply ourselves with the necessaries of life must be the first object of education, to earn wealth is certainly not its sole nor its chief end. 'A mind well trained and equipped has always been regarded by its possessor as more valuable than any material wealth. Kepler amidst all his difficulties used to say that he would rather be the author of the works he had written, than possess the Duchy of Saxony. But why go to Germany for such examples? In this classic land of ours in its good olden days, honourable and contented poverty was the common lot of the learned classes. And it was when our learned classes cared little for material wealth that they were able to lay by those invaluable intellectual treasures which are still the pride of their nation. The mind is the noblest part of our being, and education which improves and enriches the mind so as to make it happy within itself, can never be said to be useless, even if it does not enable one to earn the means of physical comfort and enjoyment.

It should therefore be our aim to encourage such education as not only brings on material prosperity, but also improves and enriches the mind—education which is not only a means to an ulterior end, but is an end in itself, so that even if our graduates

and undergraduates are unable to make their education a means of earning wealth, they may not have any just ground of complaint that preparation for our examinations has been useless labour. And we should carefully ascertain and remove, so far as we can, every cause that stands in the way of our securing this great object.

Now one of the causes which interferes with our University education having a wholesome disciplinary effect on the mind is, according to certain competent authorities, the great extent of our courses of study. Teachers and professors in order to get through the work have, we are told, to skim over the surface, and they cannot find time to impress on their pupils those deeper lessons that underlie all literature and science; while, on the other hand, the majority of students are so completely ground down by the weight of the burden imposed on them, that they find no opportunity of exercising their own powers, and they feel little pleasure in their study.

I would earnestly call the attention of our Boards of Studies to the subject, and I have no doubt that they will do their best to remove the evils complained of. Not that I would allow our standards to be lowered in the slightest degree, but I think that the standard of an examination is really raised not so much by requiring a more extensive but superficial reading as by insisting on a deeper culture and a more thorough appreciation of what is read. Knowledge forced into the mind under high pressure only inflates the mind with conceit, without producing any healthy expansion of ideas, it strains and enervates instead of exercising and invigorating the mental powers.

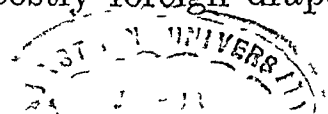
But if the great extent of the courses of study prevents instruction from being impressive, and stands in the way of our education producing any lasting effect, the inconvenient and unmanageably large size of the classes in most of our schools and colleges, I fear, leads no less to the same result. It prevents teachers from looking to the individual wants of pupils and from exercising that personal influence upon them which is essential to efficient teaching. Speaking in the presence of so many able and experienced teachers and professors, I need hardly add that the teachers should not only impart to those seated at his feet the knowledge he possesses, but should also inspire them with the enthusiasm that animates

him, should stimulate them with the thirst for knowledge which he feels, that the instruction given might be imbibed with eagerness and delight. He should, to use the expressive language of our ancient traditions, bless them with his own intellectual blessedness.

Another cause which operates prejudicially in a similar way, is the time-serving spirit in which our young men often pursue their study. A pernicious habit, which I am sorry to hear is gaining strength, prevails with the great bulk of our students of reading, not with a view to gain knowledge and improve the mind, but merely with a view to pass examinations. It is high time now that our teachers and professors should exert all their influence resolutely to put down this evil, and should use every opportunity forcibly to point out to their pupils the lamentable folly of wasting their time and energy in learning the petty art of achieving unmerited success at the temporary trials in the examination hall when they should be improving and strengthening their minds to qualify them for the continued trial in life.

Whilst imputing to our students the blame that justly attaches to them, I must not disclaim our own share of it. Our examinations have, no doubt from a desire to make them thorough and searching, occasionally been such as to require special preparation as distinguished from such general study of the prescribed subject as a student desirous of gaining knowledge and improving his mind would naturally go through. We have sometimes demanded from our examinees a too minute knowledge of minor details, or knowledge of a sort that is not likely to be necessary or useful anywhere except in the examination hall. As a very eminent and experienced examiner, Professor Huxley, has remarked, 'examination, like fire, is a good servant, but a bad master.' It should serve as a test for diligent and thoughtful study, instead of making study serve its peculiar requirements.

One great reason why our University education fails to awaken much original thinking, is because it is imparted through the medium of a difficult foreign language, the genius of which is so widely different from that of our own. The acquisition of such a language must to a great extent be the work of imitation, and the habit of imitation gradually becomes so deep-rooted as to influence our intellectual operations generally. Again, the costly foreign drapery



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in which our students have to clothe their thoughts, taxes their limited mental resources to an extent which does not leave enough for the proper feeding and fostering of thought. The only way out of the difficulty is for the student to economise his means and to forego all desire for finery in language, and concentrate his efforts to the cultivation of the thinking faculty, and he may rest assured that noble thoughts never fail to command attention, though clad in plain and homely garb.

Perhaps the most potent of all the reasons why our education often fails to improve and invigorate the mind, and why the promises of youth are in many cases so little fulfilled in later years, is our deplorable neglect of physical education. If we had left our young men alone, our responsibility for this neglect might not have been equally great. But as it is, we impose upon them heavy intellectual work, and by means of our degrees and other marks of distinction supply a powerful stimulus for such work; and yet we take no care to strengthen the body to enable it to bear the strain. The result is that so long as the stimulus acts, our young men work hard and thereby exhaust their unreplenished powers; and when the stimulus is gone, their capacity for work is permanently impaired. Any attempt to improve the mind without invigorating the vital energy would be like an attempt to increase the efficiency of machinery by mere internal adjustment without supplying adequate motive power.

The University can do very little to remedy the evil, but those who are intrusted with the management of schools and colleges should never forget their responsibility in this matter. They should strongly impress upon their students the indispensable necessity of attending to health, and they should encourage healthful and harmless physical exercise, and supply facilities for it, without, however, introducing any element of compulsion or restraint. One very hopeful sign of progress in this direction is to be found in the fact that the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province is taking a kindly personal interest in the physical well-being of our students, and I take this opportunity of sincerely thanking His Honour for the encouragement they have been receiving from him. And may I here appeal to Government and private liberality to acquire for us some suitable play-ground near the Senate House

where our undergraduates may resort, so that side by side with the seat of those trials that so severely tax the mind, there may be a place for refreshing recreation to strengthen the body and the University may be associated not only with distressing thoughts of impending examinations, but also with joyous recollections of youthful pastime and innocent pleasure?

There is one other educational topic upon which I have a word to say. A good deal of adverse criticism, sometimes proceeding from high authorities, is levelled against the fluctuating percentage of failures at our examinations, which no doubt ranges between widely divergent limits. The fact commented upon certainly requires examination, and I must thank our critics for drawing attention pointedly to it. If it is due to any variation in our standard, the result is clearly unfair to the examinees. But it may be due to other causes besides, as a little consideration will shew. Ordinarily no doubt, one year is just as good as another, and the percentage of good candidates would not vary greatly from year to year. But owing to some change in the teaching staff of a large college or owing to an epidemic such as influenza, (causes which are not altogether imaginary, but have sometimes been in actual operation) the percentage of ill-prepared candidates in any year may greatly exceed the average. Besides, there are, as every one who has experience in the line knows, good and bad years in respect of the proportion of good and bad students in a class, just as there are good and bad years in respect of many natural phenomena, though we are not always able to ascertain the cause. So then the University may not always and alone be responsible for the fluctuations noticed. So far as it is, it should do its best to prevent any recurrence of the evil. One of the remedies suggested, the appointment of a permanent Board of Examiners, though theoretically perfect, involves many practical difficulties. The subject will, however, I hope, receive careful consideration soon.

Whilst on this subject of criticism on our work, I would beg leave to say to our critics in all sincerity and earnestness, that such of them as are in a position directly to assist the University in its deliberations, will do immensely greater service to it if they will favour it with their counsels first, and then, if need be, with their criticisms next.

I must now offer my young friends who have just obtained their degrees my most hearty congratulations. The success of the lady-graduates, one of whom I have had the pleasure of admitting to her degree, is to my mind matter for special congratulation. In saying this I am far from insinuating that their success was unexpected or exceptional; on the contrary, considering the highly susceptible nature of the gentler sex which enables them to imbibe knowledge soon and retain it long, such success is but natural, and the poet truly says .

“স্বিত্রনা হি নান ধ্বংসেত নিসর্গাদেব পণ্ডিতাঃ ।
পুণ্যমাণাং পণ্ডিতং শাস্ত্রেনোপদিষ্যতে ॥”

“ Men seeking knowledge long must strive,
And over many volumes pore ;
But favoured women all their lore
With ease from Nature's grace derive.”

What I mean to say is that their success is a more sure index of the progress of education than the success of young men can be. Young men may and very often do seek for knowledge in order to succeed in life, but when women, who are far less likely to be swayed by such motives, seek for it, the love of knowledge for its own sake must be influencing those whose influence upon society though gentle is irresistible.

I would also specially congratulate the three distinguished graduates in Arts (1) who have won our most valuable prize—the Premchand Roychand Studentship, and the young Doctor (2) who, after a brilliant college career, has so well earned the highest degree in Medicine. I would, at the same time, remind the former that their valuable prizes though given as rewards for past labour are really intended as incentives to future exertion, and I would exhort the latter to emulate the examples of the eminent members of his noble profession at home and abroad.

Many of you, my young friends, may be thinking now that you have passed through the first stage of life, the stage of preparation, and are about to enter the second, the stage of action. The

¹ Messrs E. M. Wheeler, Janaki Nath Bhattacharyya and Harendra Nath Datta.

² Dr. Suresh Prasad Saibadhikari.

first stage with its incessant toil and rigid discipline may have seemed to you a disagreeable one, while youthful fancy may be painting the second in glowing colours, as the stage of unrestrained activity and unimpeded fruition. I should have been most unwilling to dispel this pleasing illusion had I not been firmly convinced that it is the source of little joy and much sorrow. The illusion must soon disappear and leave painful disappointment behind. Better far that we should at once know the realities of our situation, be they agreeable or disagreeable, to be prepared beforehand to meet what awaits us.

Now one of the most distressing realities of the world you are going to enter, is the immense disproportion between the many that toil and the few that succeed. If at any of the examinations held in this hall, there is heavy failure, the result attracts public attention, and evokes criticism, and steps are taken to prevent its recurrence in future. But who can criticise to any purpose the conduct of the world's examinations? We must take the world as it is. But if you cannot make the world conform to your views, you must not, on the other hand, servilely suit yourselves to the world to achieve success. Depend upon it that there is often more honour in deserving success, than in attaining it. Have firm faith in the consoling truth that in the inscrutable dispensations of Providence, out of evil cometh good, and that adversity is not an unmixed evil. I do not ask you to imitate the example of the pious lady in the *Puranas* who preferred adversity to prosperity because it enabled her better to remember her Maker, for prosperity is not necessarily an evil, and should therefore be greeted when she comes. But I do ask you to submit, if it ever be your lot to do so, to adversity's stern and chastening rule with calmness and fortitude. If she bears a frowning look, remember that

“ Scared at her frown terrific fly
 Self-pleasing folly's idle brood,
 Wild laughter, noise, and thoughtless joy,
 And leave us leisure to be good ”

Another perplexing reality of our situation is the strange inconsistency between profession and practice. Very few men outwardly profess any principles of doubtful propriety, but fewer

still perhaps are they who can inwardly say unto themselves they have never swerved from their professed principles. As students you have spent much time in learning principles, be it then your first aim upon entering life rigidly to adhere to those principles in spite of the contaminating influence of example. If you wish to succeed in life, that is, if you wish to control the material forces of Nature and the still more subtle forces that move society, so as to make them subserve your purpose, you must possess a powerful and a resolute will, —a will at least as powerful and resolute as can enable you to bring your own actions into conformity with the principles you profess.

If you are able to surmount these difficulties, if you can reconcile your practice with your principles, and if, furthermore, you can reconcile yourself with your lot, you shall have earned that peace within, that true source of happiness, which even the most successful men often fail to attain. And your success, though measured by the amount of work done it may not be great, will surely not be small if measured by the moral strength acquired, strength which will not only sustain you in the race of life, but will stand you in good stead even in that awful stage of it that leads to eternity.

NOTE OF DISSENT TO THE REPORT OF THE INDIAN UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION, 1902

I regret very much that I am unable to agree with my learned colleagues on some of the points dealt with in our Report. These points of difference being of importance more or less, I deem it my duty to state my views upon them, in the order in which they occur in the Report, and to indicate briefly my reasons in support of those views.

I. CONSTITUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE SYNDICATE

Before concluding this point I should add, that in whatever way the new Senates may be constituted, whether by appointment

alone or partly by election as well, they should fairly and adequately represent Government and private educational interests, and non-educational official and non-official interests, and these interests should be represented by Europeans and Indians in fair, and if possible equal, proportion

In saying this, I know I am saying what is not quite in accord with ordinarily accepted views on the subject. It is maintained by many that educational interests are all that need be represented on the Senate of a University; and it is said by some that as a University is a Western institution, the European element should predominate in the Senate, with only a small admixture of the Indian element to enable the European members to know what the views of the Indians are upon any question affecting them. Speaking with all respect for these opinions, I must say that my own view, though opposed to them, is not altogether unreasonable, as a little consideration will show

Universities exist for promoting the advancement of learning, and in the constitution of their Senates, the educational interests are no doubt entitled to representation before all others; but there are other interests involved which also require representation, and which must not be ignored. and they are those of the Government and the general public.

For, the Universities may have to consider questions of educational policy, such as, whether general liberal education alone should engage their attention, or whether technical education should also be encouraged, to develop the resources of the country, questions upon the determination of which the Government as responsible for the peace and prosperity of the country and quite irrespective of its position as the proprietor of colleges, must, along with the general public, be at least as deeply interested as professors of colleges. So again, they may have to consider a question like that relating to the age limit for the Entrance Examination, in the determination of which, the public, that is the guardians of students, are perhaps as much concerned as mere educationists, as upon the decision of the question depends not only the chance of an Indian graduate's entering public service, but also the time of his finishing his education and entering the world. Nor must we lose sight of other classes of questions which often arise, such as those relating

to the affiliation of new colleges, or to the transfer of students from one college to another, in relation to which, representatives of existing colleges have an interest disqualifying them to act as sole arbiters in the matter, and the educated portion of the general public have an interest entitling them to a voice in the decision.

Again, though it is quite true that the University is a Western institution, and active friendly co-operation of European scholars and scientists is at the present day absolutely necessary, and must at all times be most cordially welcome, in the management of India Universities, it should also be borne in mind that it is Indian youths who chiefly resort to them, and that their requirements and difficulties, their habits and modes of life, and even their sentiments and susceptibilities should receive due consideration, and for that purpose educated Indians should be adequately represented on the Senate. In saying this I do not lose sight of a possible danger sometimes apprehended, of Indian members seeking to lower the standard of education in order to make the attainment of academic distinctions easy for their countrymen; but I venture to think that self-interest, if not also sound judgment, aided by past experience, will serve as a sufficient safe-guard, and Indians will no longer fail to see that to make University degrees in this country of any real value, we must raise their standards as high as they are in the great English Universities.

In regard to the constitution of the Syndicate, I am unable to agree to the proposal in clause (c) at page 13 of the Report for securing a majority of teachers.

My reasons for not having a statutory majority of teachers as such in the Syndicate have already been indicated in my remarks relating to the Senate in the preceding paragraph of this Note. Considering the duties which the Syndicate has to perform, and considering that it will not be likely to have all colleges or even all classes of colleges represented on the Syndicate, a statutory majority of teachers as such will be undesirable in the interests as well of the general public as of the colleges themselves.

I may add that I would not object to a majority of teachers on the Syndicate if such majority resulted from an unrestricted election by the Senate, which would imply that the teachers formed

the majority because they were considered fit to be on the Syndicate and not simply because they were teachers.

II. DISAFFILIATION OF COLLEGES BY THE SYNDICATE

The next point upon which I feel constrained to disagree with my learned colleagues is the proposal made in page 13 of the Report, that no decision of the Syndicate for the disaffiliation of a college should be open to revision by the Senate

It may be said that as the Syndicate is the authority which recommends affiliation, there can be no objection to the same authority recommending disaffiliation; it may also be apprehended that if the matter be left in the hands of the Senate, it may give rise to undesirable canvassing, and it may be urged in favour of the recommendation in the Report, that even if the Syndicate arrives at a wrong decision in any case, it may be set right by the Government in whose hands the power of ordering disaffiliation finally rests.

But in the first place, the state of things with which we are concerned at the time of an application for affiliation of a new college must be very different from that at the time when the Syndicate recommends the disaffiliation of an old college, it may be, of long standing. The effect of an adverse order in the former case can affect no large or vested interests, whereas an adverse order in the latter must affect the vested interests, not only of the college concerned, but also of its students. Then, again, the question whether affiliation should be withdrawn, may involve considerations of much greater nicety and difficulty than the question whether it should be granted. It does not, therefore, follow that because the Syndicate is the final authority to determine the latter question, it should be also entrusted with the duty of determining the former finally so far as the University is concerned.

As for the apprehension about canvassing, I may observe that it is not likely to work much harm in our reformed Senates.

And as for the safe-guard against any error of the Syndicate which the action of the Government might afford, I would beg leave to point out that, as the Government must naturally derive its information from the Syndicate or the Director of Public In-

struction who under the new scheme will always be a member of the Syndicate, and as they both must be committed to the view they have already taken in recommending disaffiliation, the chances of Government having before it any materials which would warrant its reversing the decision of the Syndicate, must be very small.

It may be said that the Government may in some cases affirm the decision of the Syndicate and reverse that of the Senate, thus placing the latter in an awkward position, and that it is not desirable, therefore, to give the Senate any power of revision. The chance of being overruled by Government may be a very good reason for making the Senate cautious in its interference, a thing by no means undesirable; but it can form no reason for not giving the Senate any power of revision. Such chance exists in every case in which a revisional authority is not the final authority.

It is desirable, therefore, that before Government takes action upon any recommendation by the Syndicate for the disaffiliation of a college, that college should have an opportunity of bringing the matter before the Senate, so that the Government may, when passing final order in the case, have before it the opinion of the Senate as well as that of the Syndicate, together with the materials upon which those opinions are based.

III FEES IN ARTS COLLEGES

Another point upon which I am unable to agree in the Report is that relating to the fixing of a minimum rate of fees in Arts Colleges, dealt with at pages 16 to 19.

In my opinion the minimum rate of college fees should be left to adjust itself according to the circumstances of each Province, and the Universities should not interfere in determining it, unless there be very strong reasons for doing so. My learned colleagues think that such reasons exist, and that Universities should interfere.

The reasons given, as I understand them, are—

- (1) That "fees must not be fixed so low as to tempt a poor student of but ordinary ability to follow a University course which it is not to his real interest to undertake;"
- (2) That "the work of collegiate education has been much impeded by the attendance at colleges of students

whose abilities do not qualify them for University education," and this is a result of "low fees and the grant of free studentships solely on account of poverty"; and

- (3) That "if a minimum rate of fees is not enforced, the standard of education and discipline is lowered" by undue competition among unaided institutions leading to the lowering of fees and thus reducing their efficiency for want of means.

Speaking with all respect, I must say I am wholly unable to accept the first reason as sound. Whether it is to the real interest of a poor student of but ordinary ability to follow a University course, it is for him and for those immediately interested in him to decide. Others may give him proper advice, but no University would be justified in imposing any restriction such as a prohibitive fee for the sole purpose of preventing him from entering it, if he satisfies all other ordinary tests of fitness for doing so. Youths of ordinary ability are often found to develop considerably their mental powers later and by slow degrees. Then again, while fully admitting that the highest aim of University education should be to produce men who can add to the stock of human knowledge and culture, we must also bear in mind that it would be no unworthy aim of such education, especially in a country like India where high education has made such small progress, to produce men who by adding to their own knowledge and culture raise the position of the communities to which they belong. The number of men who will prove fit for the former purpose must be very small; and equally small must be the number of those who can before trial be pronounced unfit for the latter.

The principle of excluding students from University education by a fee limit is open to the further objection, that it will, on the one hand, exclude not only the undeserving but also the deserving poor students; while, on the other hand, it will fail to exclude the undeserving rich students. My learned colleagues think that the exclusion of deserving poor students may be prevented by the award of scholarships. I do not see how that will be practicable. The best among the deserving may be helped in that way, but not all. The number of students who pass the Entrance Examination

of the Calcutta University in the first division may be taken on an average, roughly speaking to be about 1,000. They may all be fairly regarded as deserving students; but we can hardly expect to have so many scholarships. Nor can it be said that they all deserve scholarships; and it will be invidious and impracticable to separate the poor from the rich among these 1,000 students for the award of scholarships.

It will, therefore, be unjust and unwise to fix a minimum fee rate for the purpose of excluding poor students of fair average merit from University education.

The second reason for a fee limit appears, in my humble judgment, to be equally unsound. If the work of collegiate education is impeded by the presence of ill-qualified students, the remedy for the evil lies, not in raising the college fee, which will fail to exclude the richer classes of such students, but in raising the qualification for entering a college. That is not only the direct but the only feasible mode of getting rid of unfit students.

The third reason no doubt requires careful consideration. If undue competition, by lowering the college fees and thus diminishing the resources of unendowed private colleges, has impaired their efficiency, the question arises whether University should interfere and fix a minimum fee rate, or whether they should simply determine the conditions of efficiency, such as a full and competent teaching staff, a good library and properly equipped laboratory, and leave the colleges to fix such fees as they may consider necessary to enable them to satisfy those conditions.

Of the two alternative remedies suggested above in the statement of the question, I should prefer the latter; that is, I should limit the interference of the Universities to determining the conditions of efficiency, and leave it to the colleges to fix their own fees consistently with their being able to satisfy those conditions. My main reason for taking this view is, the extreme difficulty of fixing a proper minimum fee rate, of enforcing it in practice, and of completely enumerating and accurately stating the exceptions and qualifications to which it must be made subject in order to prevent hardship and injustice.

Perhaps the only case in which the interference of the University, in fixing a minimum fee rate would be desirable, is where

the majority of the affiliated colleges ask it to do so. But no such case has yet arisen; and when it arises, it will be open to the University which is asked to interfere, to take such action as it may think fit.

IV. TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

The next point upon which I am unable to concur with my learned colleagues is their recommendation at page 19 of the Report that—

“No transfer should be permitted in the middle of a course of study unless for special reasons to be recorded in writing by the college authorities and reported to the Syndicate”

I am fully alive to the importance of maintaining discipline, and would disallow transfer in the middle of a course if such transfer is sought for to avoid the enforcement of discipline. But the recommendation just referred to, goes very much further.

The reasons that may be urged against freedom of transfer are—

- (1) that free transfer is detrimental to discipline;
- (2) that free transfer is detrimental to the interests of the student asking for it;
- (3) that free transfer is detrimental to the interests of the college to which the student belongs.

The first is the only good reason against allowing free transfer; and where a transfer is applied for to evade discipline, it should be disallowed. To extend the prohibition any further would be to impose undue restriction on the freedom of the student.

As to the second reason, I think it should be left to the student and his guardian to judge whether the transfer applied for would be beneficial to him or not.

And as to the third, I do not think it would be right to protect a college at the expense of the student. A college should depend for protection more upon its own strength and efficiency than upon rules against transfer.

Because a student takes his admission into a certain college, that is no reason why he should be compelled to continue in it.

until his course is finished. His circumstances may change for the worse or the better, making him either unable to pay the fees of that college or able to pay the higher fees of a better college ; or the circumstances of the college may change by changes in its staff ; and it may become desirable for the student to obtain a transfer. To compel him to state his reasons in such a case would be most undesirable, and more injurious to discipline than to allow the transfer freely.

The attachment of a student to his college is no doubt a most laudable and wholesome feeling, and should be always carefully fostered and encouraged. But it should be spontaneous ; and it cannot be created by any compulsory rules against transfer. Such rules may protect the pecuniary interests of colleges ; but they will be far from being conducive to the creation of any such feeling ; indeed, to the Indian mind, they will make the relation between a student and his college appear more mercenary than it ought to be. They may also, by guaranteeing protection against any falling off of students, indirectly tend to impair the desire for improvement on the part of colleges.

I would, therefore, recommend the allowing of transfer freely, except where it is asked for to evade discipline.

V IMPROVEMENT OF COLLEGES

The next recommendation in the Report, in which I am unable to concur, is that contained at page 19, according to which, Second Grade Colleges, that is, those teaching only up to the standard of the First Examination in Arts, should either rise to the rank of First Grade Colleges, that is, teach up to the B.A. standard, or fall back to the position of high schools.

The reasons for this recommendation, as far as I understand them, are, that such colleges are really schools with two college classes added, and that the distinction between college students and school boys is not observed in them as well as it ought to be.

So far as the recommendation aims at the abolition of inefficient second grade colleges, I entirely concur in it. But that a college should cease to exist merely because it is a second grade college with a school attached, is a proposition to which I am unable to

assent If it does its work efficiently so far as it aims, it is no good objection against it that it does not aim higher The objection that the distinction between college students and school boys is apt to be overlooked in such institutions, appears to me to be, I must say with all respect, more of a sentimental than of a practical character, especially with reference to non-residential educational institutions such as most of our colleges and schools are.

The teaching in such institutions stopping at the F.A. or Intermediate standard, no doubt leaves the Arts course of study incomplete ; but our University system by recognizing the attainment of that standard as a qualification for admission to the courses of study in Medicine and Engineering, indirectly recognises a legitimate break in the Arts course after the F.A. Examination

I would add that, considering the wide limits of our University spheres, the difficulties in the way of students resorting to a few central places of study within those limits, the scattered nature of the existing second grade colleges, and the fact of their having done good work in the past, it would be undesirable in the interests of education that they should be compelled to cease to exist unless they make an attempt to rise higher,—an attempt which may reduce many of them to a worse condition than what they are now in

With regard to First Grade Colleges, I should here observe that as high education has made only small progress in this country, and as most of those colleges have been established to meet the educational wants of the people, though it is necessary to introduce improvements in them for increasing their efficiency and for raising the standard of education, the Universities must not only be careful not to press measures of reform with undue haste, but should also actively help the colleges in bringing about the required reforms And one of the modes in which Universities may render such help would be by establishing Physical and Chemical laboratories which may, under suitable conditions and restrictions, be available to such of the colleges as are earnestly endeavouring to improve by applying all their resources to increase their efficiency, without reserving any profit for their proprietors The forced abolition of any such college, owing to its inability to equip itself fully, must be regretted by all, and should be prevented if possible. Nor will

it be any improper diversion of University funds, derived as they are chiefly from fees paid by students, to apply them in part to help colleges to which the poorer classes of students resort for receiving education at a moderate cost.

VI. RECOGNITION OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The next point in the Report to which I find myself unable to assent, is the recommendation contained at page 20 that the recognition of a school by the University should depend upon its recognition by the Director of Public Instruction.

So far as Government and aided schools are concerned, there can be no objection to this recommendation. But as regards unaided private schools, the propriety of the recommendation is open to question. These schools receive no aid from Government; and it does not seem to be right to place them practically under the control of the Education Department, to subject them to the rules made by the Director of Public Instruction, and to compel them to adopt the scheme of studies prescribed by him. It would amount to an undue interference with their freedom of action in directions in which they might be left free to move, with benefit to themselves and without harm to others; and it would tend to reduce the school education of each Province to a dead level of uniformity not always conducive to progress.

All that the unaided private schools want is recognition by the University, so that they may send up their students as candidates for the University Entrance Examination; and for that purpose, all that the University is called upon to ascertain is that they are well-conducted institutions, are efficient in teaching up to the Entrance Examination standard, and are not injurious to the interests of discipline. It is true, the University has no adequate machinery for ascertaining these matters, and even if it were to determine the question of recognition of a school for itself, it must depend upon the Director of Public Instruction for information. But though in practice the report of the Director of Public Instruction or of one of his subordinates will have to be accepted, as matter of principle the determination of the question of recognition should be an act of the University. Moreover, even from

a practical point of view, it makes a great deal of difference whether the recognition of a school is an act of the University or of the Education Department. For with all respect for an officer of the high position of a Director of Public Instruction, one may say that the Syndicate of the University, of which he will always be a member and which has other responsible members associated with him, would be a better authority to determine any question than he alone can be

Unaided private schools no doubt concern the Education Department in this respect that they compete with schools recognized by it. But this circumstance, while it entitles the head of the Department to a voice in the determination of the question of their recognition, is itself a reason for not making him the sole judge in the matter

VII ABOLITION OF TEXT-BOOKS IN ENGLISH FOR THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

The point next in order upon which I feel bound to note my dissent, is the recommendation contained at page 25 of the Report, for the abolition of text books in English for the Entrance Examination

The main reason for this recommendation, as I gather from the Report, may be stated thus. The object with which students of the Entrance class read English is "to enable them to read with ease the books from which they will derive information in other subjects during their college course. To secure this the Entrance course can be described in general terms, a list of books being given by way of illustration. The list might consist of historical or descriptive books from which the student would obtain useful knowledge as well as linguistic training, and it should be so long as to exclude the possibility of all of them being committed to memory"

With all respect for the opinion of my learned colleagues, I would beg leave to point out that the object mentioned above will be better secured by prescribing suitable text books than by the plan recommended in the Report

In the first place, it is not correct to say that the mere prescribing of text books leads students to commit to memory keys

and notes without understanding the text. It is the prescribing of books abounding in obscure allusions, or containing thoughts and expressions beyond the comprehension of those for whom they are intended, or written in a style which cannot serve as a model for students to imitate, that leads to the evil spoken of, as some of the witnesses have said; and the remedy lies not in abolishing text books, but in prescribing better books than those in use.

In the second place, it is not correct to assume that students mechanically commit to memory keys and notes without reading the text, for the mere pleasure or convenience of doing so. Everyone who knows anything about the way in which students work at home, must know at what cost of time and trouble, and how reluctantly, they follow that course; and if they do so nevertheless, it is partly because the method of teaching in most places does not discourage that course, and chiefly because the method of Examination to which they are to be subjected, encourages it, as the evidence before us goes to show. The true remedy for the evil of cramming lies then in starting with suitable text books and improving the modes of teaching and examination.

Nor will it be safe to assume that we shall suppress cramming by abolishing text books unless we also improve our methods of teaching and examination. There are already existing many hand-books, for the study of English and books of model essays; and if text books are abolished, there will soon come into existence many more books of the same type, as well as summaries, abstracts and compendious keys of the several books which the University might recommend, and in place of a careful study of the text book and its keys, there will be substituted a hurried reading of the numerous books just referred to, thus giving rise to a worse sort of cramming than the one we are trying to check.

The recommendation in the Report seems also to underrate the importance of a careful and critical study of suitable text books, which is one of the best modes in which an Indian student at that stage of his progress at which he is preparing for the Entrance Examination, can acquire a correct knowledge of English. A less careful and less critical reading extending over a wider range may perhaps secure the same result. But an Entrance student has not the time for it; and, moreover, it may encourage the habit

of superficial and perfunctory reading, by no means desirable in a student. If there is to be any wide range of reading at all, it should be, as Mr. Stephen, Officiating Principal of the Duff College, in his evidence said, "of a simple and fluent character" and combined with "exact reading to some small extent."

If besides being examined in a suitable text book prescribed, candidates are also examined in unseen passages set for explanation, the evil of cramming will be sure to be checked, and students will try to learn English.

I would accordingly recommend that suitable text books in English should be prescribed for the Entrance Examination, and unseen passages also set for explanation.

VIII CENTRALIZATION OF LAW TEACHING

The next point upon which I am unable to agree with my learned colleagues is the recommendation at pages 34, 35 of the Report that each University should provide a properly equipped Central Law College.

In Madras and Lahore, Law education is already centralized and there are no indications of any endeavour to multiply Law Colleges in either of those two places. The question of centralizing legal teaching in Madras and Lahore must therefore be taken as practically settled for the present.

In each of the cities of Bombay and Allahabad there is only one Law College; but there are other Law colleges affiliated to the Universities of Bombay and Allahabad; while the University of Calcutta has a large number of Law colleges affiliated to it, four of which are in Calcutta and the rest in the mofussil. The question of centralizing Law education may therefore arise with reference to the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Allahabad.

The state of things observed at Lahore and the city of Bombay does not, however, make one very hopeful about the efficacy of centralization. Moreover, there is a circumstance connected with the colleges of Bengal which should be noticed here. The income derived by some of them from their Law department goes materially to help their Arts department; and if the former be closed, as will be the case if Law education is centralized, the latter will suffer. This is a result which should be avoided if possible.

Another strong reason against centralization, so far as Calcutta is concerned, consists in the large number of its Law students. No central college, however well managed, can conveniently accommodate or efficiently teach such a large number of students

As regards the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Allahabad, I would therefore leave Law teaching in the hands of the colleges ; provided that they increase their staff where it is insufficient, and make arrangements for tutorial supervision by having classes in the evening as well as in the morning And I would recommend that those three Universities should establish at their local centres good Law libraries accessible to all Law students of affiliated colleges, and Law societies under the guidance of Committees composed of members of the Bench and the Bar of the High Court and of the Professors of the Law colleges, where Law students may meet and read papers and have debates on questions connected with Law.

It may be said that a College is bound to devote the whole of the income derived from its Law department to the improvement of that department, and it should not appropriate any portion of such income to the purposes of its Arts department ; and that one of the reasons given above for allowing Law teaching to remain in the hands of private colleges is therefore a bad reason.

I am unable to accept this view as correct No doubt the improvement of the Law department should be the first charge on the income derived from that department But if after satisfying that charge, any surplus remains, there is no good reason for holding that it should not be appropriated to the purposes of the Arts department of the college. Such freedom in the appropriation of its funds is beneficial to the college as a whole without being injurious to any part of it, and it should not be restricted, seeing that our private colleges have so little in the shape of endowments to support them

IX THE MATRICULATION AND THE SCHOOL FINAL EXAMINATION

Another portion of the Report in which I am unable to concur is that at pages 45 to 48 in which my learned colleagues express their views as to whether and how far the School Final Examination should take the place of the Matriculation Examination.

No definite scheme of the School Final Examination being before us, we cannot compare its merits with those of the Matriculation Examination. But whatever the nature of that scheme may be, we may say this that if a literary, as distinguished from a technical, course of school education is retained, as one may presume it will be, the test of such education and that of a student's fitness to enter a college or University, ought to be the same, and one examination ought to be sufficient as a test for both, instead of examinations being multiplied unnecessarily. A large examination no doubt has its difficulties, but they are not removed by making the School Final to take the place of the Matriculation Examination.

The question is reduced to this, namely, whether if there is to be one examination, it should be the School Final or the Matriculation Examination, I think it ought to be the latter. It will serve the double purpose of testing whether a student has pursued his school course of literary education properly and whether he is fit to enter a college. The opposite view will result in placing all schools, whether they receive aid from Government or not, under the control of the Education Department, though many of them impart education only to enable their students to enter the University. The latter class of schools where they receive no aid ought to be placed under the control of the University.

If the object be to prevent unfit students from entering the University, it will be secured by raising the standard of the Matriculation Examination as the Report recommends, and it will not be necessary to remove the examination which students have to pass after finishing their school education, from the control of the University and place it under that of the Education Department or to wish for the Matriculation certificate not being taken as a qualification for certain purposes.

The view approved in the Report will also have the effect of materially reducing the resources of the Universities which are derived in a large measure from the fees paid by candidates for the Matriculation Examination.

X. APPOINTMENT OF TEACHERS TO SET QUESTIONS PAPERS

The point next in order in the Report upon which I deem it my duty to note my dissent, is the recommendation at page 50

for the repeal of the rule, that no one engaged in teaching a subject for any examination should be appointed to set questions in that subject for that examination.

The reason for this recommendation, as I understand it, is that teachers are the persons best qualified to set proper question papers in their respective subjects. Theoretically, perhaps, this may be true; but judging from practical results, one cannot say much in favour of papers set at our examinations by teachers as examiners. For though the rule prohibiting the appointment of teachers to set papers has been in operation in Calcutta only since 1890, the complaint against the suitableness of the papers set has been of much longer duration; and the questions set before that date do not compare favourably with those of subsequent years. Nor has there been any great practical inconvenience felt in getting competent examiners, notwithstanding the operation of the rule, professors of Physics and Mathematics, and of English and History, changing places in setting papers each in the other's subject, professors teaching the B A course setting papers for the F A. examination, and professors of colleges affiliated to one Indian University setting papers for the examinations of another.

While thus the necessity for changing the rôle is at best doubtful, the reasons for maintaining it are, in my humble judgment, in full force still. The rule in Calcutta was adopted on the unanimous recommendation of a committee (of which two such educational experts as Sir A. Croft and Mr. Tawney were members) appointed to enquire into and report upon the alleged premature disclosure of certain examination questions (see the Minutes of the Calcutta University for 1890-91, page 49), and the view maintained by one of the professor examiners concerned in defending his action, show that there may be such honest differences of opinion in connection with the matter as would make the rule under consideration a very desirable one. The rule does not imply any reflection on the integrity of teacher examiners, but it is intended only to guard against the pupils of any teacher from having an undue advantage over other candidates at any examination, and to relieve the teacher from a conflict of duties which may arise if he is appointed to set questions in his own subject. That such undue advantage may be given, and such conflict of duties may arise, is clear when we

consider that a teacher in teaching properly, must dwell on the relative importance of the different parts of his subject, and an examiner, to examine properly, must set his question paper keeping in view such relative importance; and it is difficult to prevent the teaching from affording a fair indication of the nature of the expected examination. Mr. Todhunter of Cambridge, in his "Conflict of Studies and other Papers," says (I am referring to his remark from memory, not having the book before me now) the wonder is that the importance of a rule like the one under consideration is not more readily recognized

To my mind, it is of the utmost importance that we should secure the confidence of the public generally, and of the students in particular, in the absolute fairness of our University examinations. Again, if it is necessary in the interests of discipline that students should not talk or think lightly of their professors and examiners, we must carefully avoid giving them any reasonable ground for talking or thinking in that style

I therefore think that the rule in question is a salutary one and should be generally followed.

XI. IMPROVEMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

I may here add a few words which, though not strictly entitled to form any part of my Note of Dissent when the Report does not expressly affirm anything to the contrary, may nevertheless find a place in this Note, as the majority of the Commission, disagreeing with me, thought it not quite within their province to consider in detail or express any opinion upon the points I am going to speak of

We are agreed that although there has been a rapid multiplication of Colleges and schools connected with our Universities, and the number of graduates and undergraduates has grown largely, the education imparted is not as thorough, and the highest standards attained not as high, as might be desired

The evidence before us shows that these unsatisfactory results are due to four causes—

- (i) unsuitable text books and courses of study,
- (ii) inefficient teaching,
- (iii) injudicious methods of examination, and
- (iv) insufficient encouragement for post-graduate study.

And the operation of some of them is intensified by the poverty of the majority of Indian students, which renders them unable to obtain the help of competent private tutors. The first mentioned three causes have been dealt with in our Report so far as they directly concern the Universities, and means suggested for their complete or partial removal. The last (poverty) can only be taken note of as a reason for emphasizing the necessity of tutorial supervision in our colleges

The first three causes just referred to, begin, however, to operate much earlier in the student's career than the stage at which he enters the University, and the mischief produced by their operation for eight years of the most impressionable period of student life, is not likely to be undone by improvements in the system of College or University education for a succeeding period of four or five years. The real improvement of University education must have its foundation laid on an improved system of school education; and the few words I am going to add with reference to the three causes mentioned above, so far as they affect school education, may not, I venture to hope, be deemed altogether out of place.

(1) *Unsuitable text books and courses of study.*—One reason why our boys learn English so badly, and why they mechanically commit to memory many things without understanding them is, because we often use reading books in English which are only imperfectly intelligible to them, by reason of their relating to scenes and incidents wholly foreign to the Indian student, and we often prescribe subjects and text books involving ideas which cannot be clearly comprehended and realised by boys of tender age. To teach English to Indian boys by means of reading lessons with case and effect, we should select lessons that relate to scenes and incidents familiar to them, so that they may not have to meet the double difficulty of having to acquire knowledge of unknown matters in unknown forms of expression. Again to enable a boy to understand what he reads, and to encourage him to exercise his intelligence along with his memory, we must prescribe for him books and courses of study which he can understand, instead of appointing, as we often do, books which, though short, are by no means elementary, and subjects such as Physical Science, Physical

Geography and the difficult portions of Arithmetic, for boys of 11 or 12 years. These subjects are, it is true, read in the vernacular language of the students; but that does not meet the objection that they are read too early, that is, before the students are fit to understand them.

(ii) *Inefficient teaching*—This is due to our employing in our schools untrained and ill-paid teachers, and to our making them teach large classes. We should have as teachers men who are properly trained in the art of teaching—that is, trained not merely mechanically but intelligently, and who are of high moral character and even temper and are able to influence their pupils more by love than by fear; and they should be better paid than they are now. And we should have rules requiring (1) that no class or section of a class should contain more than 40 or 50 students and (2) that the higher classes should have regular written exercises, so necessary to enable a foreigner to learn to write English correctly.

(iii) *Injudicious methods of examination*—There are three public examinations which come before the Entrance, namely, the Lower Primary, the Upper Primary, and the Middle Vernacular, some of which are compulsory in certain Provinces. The question papers set at these examinations are not much better than those set at the Entrance Examination; and they encourage cramming in the same way. Moreover, the pressure of too many public examinations, as Dr Miller in his evidence justly says, must have an injurious effect on the infant mind.

These examinations are held to test the fitness of boys after they finish their education in their vernacular language, and are necessary so far as students not intending to proceed further in their studies are concerned. Nor would I be opposed to boys learning subjects like Mathematics, History and Geography in their vernacular, if they were taught systematically and once for all, and were not required to be learned over again in English, and if such a method was as compatible with their learning English thoroughly as the method of reading those subjects in English, a point upon which there is much difference of opinion. But to require boys of 11 or 12 years to read a number of subjects hurriedly in their vernacular, in order that they may have time to read them

again in English for their Entrance Examination, is a course which must prove injurious to mental progress.

There is one more reason, not noticed in our Report why the highest results attained by our Universities are not as high as might be desired; and it is the want of encouragement for our graduates, in the shape of scholarships or educational posts with suitable emoluments and sufficient leisure, to stimulate them to work in the fields of original research. The Premchand Roychand Studentship in Calcutta has of late years been utilized in this direction, and a few research scholarships have been founded. The enlightened liberality of the country should come forward with more help; and with greater encouragement, better results may be expected.

Before I conclude, I think it is due to my learned colleagues and to myself that I should say that I have given my most anxious attention to the points on which I felt bound to differ from them, and that our differences are due to our approaching the problem of educational reform from somewhat different points of view. My learned colleagues have aimed exclusively at raising the standard of University education and college discipline, and some of the measures of reform they have advocated for the attainment of that exclusive object, naturally enough, tend to place education under the control of Government and small bodies of experts and to reduce the control of what is known as the popular element, to repress imperfectly equipped colleges and schools, to deter students of average ability and humble means from the pursuit of knowledge, and, in short, to sacrifice surface in order to secure height. While yielding to none in my appreciation of the necessity for raising the standard of education and discipline, I have ventured to think that the solution arrived at is only a partial solution of the problem, and that we should aim not only at raising the height, but also at broadening the base, of our educational fabric. And where I have differed from my learned colleagues, I have done so mainly with a view to see that our educational system is so adjusted that while the gifted few shall receive the highest training, the bulk of the less gifted but earnest seekers after knowledge may have every facility afforded to them for deriving the benefits of high education.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION, BENGAL: STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND PLAN OF WORK*

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Those who believe that there is a Divinity that shapes our ends, naturally wish to invoke Him at the commencement of every important undertaking, to illumine what is dark in us, to raise and support what is low. I would therefore at this moment invoke that

আদ্যং পুরুষনীশানং পুরুহুতং পুরুষ্টুতং
ঐতনেকাক্ষরং ব্রহ্ম ব্যভাব্যক্তং সনাতনং ॥

that supreme Intelligence, the Origin of all things, worshipped and adored by all, that One, immutable, revealed and yet unrevealed, eternal Truth, and pray that His hallowed name may help us to relinquish all that is sordid and selfish, unworthy and unholy, and put forth our earnest efforts to attain the great object we have in view

This being the inaugural ceremony of an institution which intends to undertake in its humble way the serious work of education—the work of training workers for the various departments of life, I should not be justified in occupying your time with mere words, even if I had a richer stock of them than what I happen to possess. Forgive me then if my words are few and uttered with some degree of diffidence. Not that I am wanting in confidence in the ultimate success of the institution we are met here to inaugurate; but I would patiently wait for results without raising expectation high. It is work and not words that the public expect from us. The only useful purpose which words can serve at the present stage of our progress is to give the public an idea of our object and our plan of work, and to exhort our teachers and students to earnest exertion; and that is what I propose to do. An explanation of our aims and our methods may secure for us greater sympathy and support from our friends, and may serve to soften if not to silence unfriendly criticism.

* Speech delivered at the meeting held at the Town Hall on the 15th August, 1906 for the inauguration of the National Council of Education, Bengal, under the presidency of Sir Rash Behary Ghose

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS

The objects of the Bengal National Council of Education, as stated in its Memorandum of Association, are amongst other things

- (1) to impart Education, Literary and Scientific as well as Technical and Professional, on national lines and exclusively under national control, not in opposition to, but standing apart from, the existing systems of Primary, Secondary and Collegiate Education, attaching special importance to a knowledge of the country, its literature, history and philosophy, and designed to incorporate with the best oriental ideals of life and thought the best assimilable ideals of the west ;
- (2) to promote the study chiefly of such branches of the arts and sciences as are best calculated to develop the material resources of the country and satisfy its pressing wants ;
- (3) to provide for denominational religious education subject to certain conditions ;
- (4) to create and maintain a high standard of proficiency and to enforce strict discipline in accordance with the best traditions of the country ,
- (5) to impart and facilitate the imparting of education ordinarily through the medium of the vernaculars, and for that purpose to prepare and encourage the preparation of suitable test books in the vernaculars in arts and sciences ;
- (6) to create and maintain a high standard of qualification, intellectual as well as moral, in teachers, and found and maintain professorships and fellowships ; and
- (7) to provide and arrange for meetings and conferences to promote and advance the cause of education

It may not be out of place here to say a few words to explain why these objects are deemed necessary or desirable, and how they are intended to be attained.

1. *Education on National Lines*

In relation to the first mentioned object, there may be misconceptions which should be removed at the very outset. It may be said that though love of one's own country and one's own nation is laudable, yet education should not be limited by considerations of nationality, but should proceed upon a cosmopolitan basis. This may be true to a certain extent, and so far as it is true, the National Council accepts it by expressly providing for the incorporation of the best assimilable ideals of Western life and thought with our own. But though this assimilation of foreign ideals is desirable in the later stages of mental growth, in the earlier stages, such assimilation is not possible, and any attempt to force it on, will retard instead of accelerating the healthy development of the mind. Every student, when commencing his school education, brings with him in addition to his outfit of language the importance of which should be separately considered, his stock of thoughts and sentiments, the gift of his nation, which the teacher, instead of ignoring and hastily displacing, should try to utilize and gradually improve. Want of due regard for this elementary principle is, I think, one of the main reasons why the existing system of English education in this country has failed to produce satisfactory results. Profiting by past experience, and proceeding on *a priori* grounds, the National Council has accordingly deemed it not only desirable but necessary to resolve upon imparting education on national lines, and attaching special importance to a knowledge of the country, its literature, its history and its philosophy. But while feeling convinced that there are defects in the existing system of education and seeking to avoid them, we do not ignore the benefits received from it; and the education to be imparted by the National Council of Education is intended to stand apart from but not in opposition to the existing system.

Defective as that system may be, it has helped the spread of education, and it is because it has been tried that we are placed in a position to find out its defects and devise means of reform. The time for change of methods has certainly arrived. One party thinks that by raising the standard of education and increasing the severity of examination tests so as more largely and

more effectively to exclude the less fit from the field of work, and by making the controlling body less influenced by the popular element which is supposed to be averse to the enforcement of any stringent measures, all that is needful will be secured. There is another party, including many, if not all, the members of the National Council of Education, who believe that the defects in the existing system of education lie deeper and require more radical but less stringent measures of reform; and who while equally anxious to raise the height of our educational fabric, are for broadening its base at the same time, so that those seeking education may have what they are fitted for, and none but the absolutely unfit may be excluded from the benefits of education.

I view the matter in its purely educational aspect, and I deem it undesirable as it is unnecessary on an occasion like this, to discuss the question of Government policy, or to dwell upon the causes that have led to the establishment of the National Council of Education. I would only remark that none need be under any apprehension that the National Council of Education is antagonistic to any one or opposed to the interests of other educational institutions. We shall certainly teach our pupils to love their country and their nation, but we shall never tolerate in them, much less, teach them, want of love for others, for we devoutly believe in the principle, often lost sight of by many in the elation of prosperity or under the exasperation of adversity, that true self love is incompatible with want of love for any fellowman, and that true self-interest can never be secured by injury to the legitimate interest of others.

There is ample field for educational work, and ample scope for trial of new systems. Only a very small section of the population of the country is receiving education now, and that education is given under one uniform system all throughout. An educational institution proceeding on new lines may at least claim a fair trial. Moreover unhealthy competition must be most unlikely in this case. Our Colleges and Schools have the rare good fortune of being supported by endowments, and they will not have to depend upon fees from students.

While thus disavowing all intention of antagonism and rivalry, we confidently hope that this institution will prove a rival of other

educational institutions in this sense that its intrinsic merits may, Heaven willing, enable it to show satisfactory results. But then where is the harm? We claim no monopoly of methods. If our methods are found efficacious, they may be adopted by others and then all rivalry will disappear.

The question might be incidentally asked why if there is no rivalry, the Council does not utilise any of the existing colleges and schools by granting them pecuniary aid. The answer is simple. They all follow the system sanctioned by the Universities and are not prepared to adopt our scheme.

2 *Scientific and Technical Education*

Our second object, namely the promotion of scientific and technical education, will, I am sure, be approved by all. Technical education is absolutely necessary as affording the only possible solution of the bread problem. Many of our friends would go so far as to say that we ought in the first place to devote all our resources and energy to technical education, leaving liberal education to be provided for by the existing system. While I yield to none in my appreciation of the necessity of technical education, and while I hail with joy the opening of the Bengal Technical Institute through the enlightened liberality of my esteemed friend and fellow countryman, Mr. Palit, I am not prepared to neglect liberal education in any way. If technical education is necessary for our material prosperity, liberal culture is at least as necessary for our true happiness. Exclusive devotion to material pursuits without any counterbalancing influence of liberal spiritual culture tends to immerse us in materialism with its many attendant evils such as the unnecessary multiplication of our physical wants, the interminable conflict between capital and labour and the abject poverty of certain sections of the people. To quote the words of the learned Principal of the Bengal Technical Institute "One of the most important effects of the innumerable inventions for gratifying our senses has been to multiply our wants and raise the standard of living and thus to intensify the struggle for existence. The animal necessities of life render a certain amount of struggle almost inevitable. But the object of true progress is to minimise, not to

increase it. The more our energies are absorbed by it the less room there is for their employment in the higher struggle of the soul for attainment of a better condition." And these are the words, not of a visionary or enthusiast, but of a sound practical man of science.

In regard to technical education the Council does not entertain any ambitious project. It does not propose any comprehensive scheme for the sake of logical completeness. It will be content to promote the study of such branches of the arts and sciences as are best calculated to develop the material resources of the country and to satisfy its pressing wants. Its resources are extremely small compared with the requirements of any scheme of technical education however incomplete; and the Council appeals to the public for funds, and hopes that through the exertions of certain gentlemen who are leading members of both the institutions some satisfactory scheme of co-operation with the Bengal Technical Institute may be devised.

3 *Religious Education*

About the third object of the Council namely, religious education, there has been some difference of opinion. Being deeply convinced of the necessity of religious education, the Council have resolved upon providing for denominational religious education subject to certain conditions which I need not here consider in detail. An hour will be set apart for religious instruction when students professing different creeds will go to their respective teachers for instruction, which will not include any ritual observances. One chief purpose of such instruction is, if I may be permitted to add, to evoke and foster the religious sentiment and to make our young men realize the presence of God and the nearness of a future state, so that they may go right amidst all the difficulties of life, under the encouraging assurance that there is a beneficent almighty Power always watching over them and the land of promise where the wrongs of this world will be set right is not far off.

4 *Proficiency and Discipline*

The object of the Council next specified above, is to exact a high standard of proficiency and to enforce strict discipline.

The public in general and the student community in particular should take note of this express announcement of the Council, and remember that it will never tolerate any low standard of proficiency or laxity of discipline. Of the two main objects of education, namely, the storing of the mind with knowledge, and the training of its faculties, intellectual and moral, we consider the latter to be of much greater importance. And the Council will always take special care to make its methods of teaching helpful towards the development of the powers of intelligent observation, independent thinking, and self-reliant exertion, and the formation of habits of reverence for superiors, obedience to authority, and readiness to respond to the call of duty, rather than to the mechanical acquisition of knowledge and the memorising of moral maxims.

5 *Vernacular to be the Medium of Instruction*

Another express object of the Council is to impart education ordinarily through the medium of the vernaculars, English being studied as a second language and to prepare, and encourage the preparation of, text-books in the vernaculars in arts and science; and if this object is attained, it will have far-reaching consequences.

Except in the lowest forms, the different subjects of study have at present, all to be learnt in our schools and colleges in English, and this throws no small burden on our student. English is a very difficult language for a foreigner, especially a Bengali to learn because English and Bengali differ so widely, not only in their vocabularies but also in their grammatical structures and idioms. And this difficulty is really so great that it not only overtaxes the energy of our students, but also cramps their thought. Our scheme of imparting knowledge so far as practicable through the medium of the vernaculars will lighten the labour of the student and make the acquisition of knowledge more speedy and more direct. There is no doubt a practical difficulty arising from there being so many different vernaculars. We shall have to select not more than two; and I think they should be Bengali and Urdu.

The impetus which our scheme will give to the preparation of text-books in the different subjects in Bengali and Urdu will enrich those languages and their literature, and thereby indirectly

help the diffusion of knowledge and culture among the people generally

We keenly feel our dependence on foreign countries for the supply of manufactured articles some of which are among the necessities of life. How much more keenly should we feel our dependence on a foreign language for the supply of words for the interchange of thought not only in serious discourse on scientific subjects such as Mathematics, Psychology, Economics and Physics but even in ordinary conversation on many matters of every day concern. And the Council in that branch of its work which seeks to supply our language with necessary words for the interchange of thought is entitled to encouragement and help from every true supporter of the *Swadeshi* movement. Mark the lesson which history teaches. The ignorance of the Middle Ages was not dispelled and the Revival of Learning was not complete until knowledge began to be disseminated through the modern languages. Nor can we expect any revival of learning here until it is imparted not merely in its primary stage, but in the higher stages as well, through the medium of the vernaculars.

6 *Encouragement of Research and Training of Teachers*

The next aim of the Council as specified above is to encourage research by the grant of fellowships to advanced students, and to train teachers who should make teaching the great object of their life.

Great discoveries it is the rare privilege of genius to make or the occasional good luck of lesser intellects to hit upon. And no genius can be called into existence by the offer of fellowship, nor can a lucky chance be created by effort. But leaving great discoveries apart, there is much useful original research which bright intelligence properly trained and equipped with necessary appliances, can accomplish, and thereby add to our stock of knowledge or means of physical comfort, and the Council so far as funds permit will encourage workers in this direction.

One great drawback in the progress of education is the want of competent trained teachers. It is not every one who knows a subject that can teach it properly. Knowledge of the subject to be taught is no doubt a necessary qualification in a teacher ;

but it is not a sufficient qualification. A teacher must possess many other qualifications of a high order, intellectual as well as moral. And the training of a body of competent teachers must be a necessary preliminary to the work of education. Teaching is an art and a difficult art, and the art is based upon recondite principles of the science of mind. Every teacher must learn his art and know at least as much of mental science as concerns his art. And if the trained Schoolmaster is abroad the spread of education will receive a powerful impetus.

7. *Organisation of Educational Meetings*

The last of the objects of the Council to which I wanted to call our attention, is the organisation of meetings and conferences for advancing the cause of education. Besides occasional meetings and conferences it is proposed to have regular meetings at which persons interested in education may meet and interchange their views on various subjects and educate each other, youth profiting by the experience of age, and age being rejuvenated in knowledge by contact with youth.

II. PLAN OF WORK

The above are some of the many excellent objects which the National Council of Education has in view and the next question is, how does the Council propose to attain them.

Scheme of Studies and Examinations

The Council has prescribed courses of study under three heads, namely, (1) Primary, including a three years' course to be commenced by a boy in his 6th year; (2) Secondary, including a seven years' course to be commenced by a boy in his 9th year and finished when his age is 15 years, the course for the 5th year and the 7th year being respectively equivalent to the present Matriculation Course, and the course for the Intermediate or F.A. Examination of the Calcutta University; and (3) Collegiate, including a four years' course in a single subject, literary or scientific with one allied subsidiary subject, equivalent to the B.A. Honour Course of the University.

The scheme of Technical Education has not yet been completed. It will be settled after consultation with experts.

There will be three Public Examinations, one at the end of each course ; and for some years there will be another Examination at the end of the 5th year of the Secondary course.

I will not take through the details of these courses but merely point out to you some of the special features of the scheme of education adopted by the Council.

1. The scheme attaches just importance to the *awakening* of the power of *observation* and *thought* by means of Object Lessons.

2 It seeks to make education *pleasant* to the learner by prescribing lessons so as alternately to satisfy and stimulate natural curiosity.

3. It seeks to make education *easy* by imparting it through the medium of the learner's vernacular

4 It seeks to make education *real* by insisting on the learner's acquiring a knowledge of *things* and *thoughts* and not merely of *words* and *sentences* which are only their verbal expression

5. It seeks to *save* the learner's *time* by arranging the course of study so as to enable him to master in 5 years, after finishing his Primary Education, what he now takes 7 years to learn, the standard for the 5th year being equal to the present Entrance standard of the Calcutta University ; while that for the 6th and 7th years is equal to the standard for its Intermediate Examination in Arts, attainable under the existing system only after 9 years' study.

This saving of time will be the result of imparting knowledge through the medium of the student's vernacular and of excluding from the course of study the encumbrance of unnecessary difficulties and unimportant details.

6. The scheme facilitates Technical Education by providing for its being taken up at three different stages of the learner's progress, namely :—

- (1) At the end of the Primary Course (*i.e.*, at the age of 9 years.)
- (2) At the end of the 5th year of the Secondary Course (*i.e.*, at the age of 14 years).
- (3) At the end of the 7th year or the completion of the Secondary Course (*i.e.*, at the age of 16 years).

7. The scheme specializes the Collegiate Course to a much greater extent than what is the case under the existing system, and thus affords better facilities for higher education to students who are excluded from it now by reason of their being required to attain proficiency in a multiplicity of subjects

8 The scheme reduces within the narrowest limits the number of public examinations which are a severe strain on students, and are hindrances rather than helps to real study.

9 The scheme provides for moral education by requiring Teachers and Professors to avail themselves of every opportunity afforded by the ordinary lessons, in imparting it, and by requiring the enforcement of strict discipline in accordance with the best traditions of the country The scheme also provides for Physical Education and Religious Education subject to certain conditions

10 The scheme as a whole seeks, on its Liberal side, to train students intellectually and morally so as to mould their character according to the highest national ideals; and on its Technical side, to train them so as to qualify them for developing the natural resources of the country and increasing its material wealth.

A Model College and School

The Council has established a Model College and a Model School for imparting instruction in the courses prescribed, and appointed professors and teachers in the subjects likely to be taken up by students Regarding the efficiency of the teaching staff I shall only say this for the present, that the gentlemen appointed are either experienced teachers or distinguished graduates of Indian or European Universities I will not say more but leave their efficiency to be proved by their work There is however one merit in our staff which is entitled to immediate recognition It is the spirit of self-sacrifice which almost every member of the staff has shown Every one of them has made some personal sacrifice in joining our institution, and is actuated by a real desire to serve his country. The best thanks of the Council are due to them

Our Students and their Future Career

Two important questions here arise,—first what classes of students are likely to join our School and College?—and second,

what future careers will their training under us qualify them for?

These are questions which demand careful consideration. They have occupied the attention of several members of the Council, and I shall briefly indicate to you the answers that have occurred to us

We do not know what value will be attached by the Universities or by the Government and other employers of skilled labour, to the training we give and the tests we have prescribed; and we should therefore proceed upon the assumption that they will receive no recognition, except from Zemindars and private associations that may view this national movement with special favour. Students and their guardians must therefore clearly understand that those who join our School or College do so for the intrinsic benefits derivable from our training and not for any extrinsic advantages accruing out of it. Those who seek Government scholarships, University degrees or Government service will not have much inducement to join our institution. But they who seek knowledge and culture for their own sake, and they who seek to earn their living otherwise than by Government service or the practice of the legal profession, may not feel the same hesitation in taking admission into our College or School. We shall give our students every facility for gaining sound and useful knowledge for cultivating their mental powers, and for forming good habits. There will also be a few scholarships and fellowships available for deserving students. And these are all the advantages we can offer. In this state of things, we do not expect any great rush of students at least for the present. Nor need we feel regret if this is the case. For if the number of our students is small we shall be better able to look after them than if their number was large. There is one other class of students who will come to us, and they are those whom the University rejects or does not suit. They are an important class for whose education the National Council ought to provide. They may not be very brilliant students, but they are not all necessarily of inferior intelligence. The Calcutta University by insisting on proficiency in a multiplicity of subjects not unfrequently rejects candidates, who in their favourite subjects are fitted to do solid work and earn distinction. These students

will naturally seek admission here, and if properly directed, they may do work which will reflect credit on them and their teachers

Moreover, our Primary, Secondary and High Proficiency courses are so adjusted that no class of students, whatever their aims and aspirations may be, need be excluded from them. In our scheme, a student would ordinarily finish his Secondary course by the time he completes his 15th year, that is, one year before he is eligible for the Matriculation Examination of the University, and that Examination will be no difficult matter for him. So that aspirants for University degrees may always avail themselves of the advantages of our system of education in the Secondary stage

Then again, University graduates may join our institution for higher study and research work or for receiving training as teachers. But it should be understood that the Council does not intend to admit students who are preparing for University Examinations, and convert our College into a coaching institution for those Examinations. That would be contrary to one of our fundamental principles, which is to make Examinations serve as a test of study and not to make study serve merely as a preparation for Examinations.

I come now to the second question, namely, what careers will the training we give qualify our students for ?

Government service and the legal profession must be left out of consideration for some time at least. This is a drawback, no doubt, but is it a serious one ? The legal profession is overstocked, and Government service in the higher grades is available only for a small number among the best graduates. And it will perhaps tend to the benefit of all concerned, if the energies and aspirations of the rising generation are to some extent diverted to other directions. If the two great old avenues are closed for our students, in the self adjusting beneficent economy of nature, fresh ones will be opened, for which the times are propitious

Agriculture, Manufacture, and Commerce are the fields to which our educated young men must turn their attention ; and the scheme of study framed by the Council makes provision for qualifying students for work in those fields.

Lastly, there is the noble profession of teaching in which there is ample scope for work. And if the National Council of Education

can send forth from time to time bands of well trained teachers it will be doing substantial work to help the spread of education.

I have now given you a rough outline of the aims and plan of work of the National Council of Education. It remains for me to offer our heartfelt thanks to Babu Brajendrakishore Roychaudhuri and Babu Subodhchandra Mullick whose munificent endowments have enabled the Bengal National Council of Education to commence its work. They have earned the lasting gratitude of the country and we hope their bright example will be followed by many. Nor must I omit to acknowledge our obligations to Babu Satischandra Mukerjee who has consecrated his life to the work of Education.

Though we have been proceeding with the utmost economy and have been fortunate in securing the services of a competent teaching staff on very small remuneration, we still want funds, and large funds, to enable us to give effect to our scheme. We must appeal to our countrymen for support and I hope we shall not appeal in vain

Advice to Students

Before I conclude I may be permitted to address a few words to our teachers and students. To the former I have very little to say. They have, by accepting office under the Council at considerable sacrifice of personal interest, shown such genuine devotion to the cause of national education, that no words of exhortation are necessary from me. I will only remind them that our work will be keenly watched and severely scrutinised, and that we should always be prepared to be judged by the results of our labour

Turning now to my young friends the students, I would ask them to remember two things, first, that they are Indian students, and next, that they are students of institutions under the control of their National Council. As Indian students they should be true to the best traditions of student life in India which in the good old days was a life of *Brahmacharyya*. Theirs should be a life of ascetic simplicity, spotless purity, and rigid discipline; and they should cultivate habits of reverence for superiors, obedience to authority, and readiness to respond to the call of duty. In their

youthful ardour they are full of enthusiastic love for their country. They cannot show that love better than by conducting themselves so as to make the work of their National Council of Education a complete success

They should not allow the distressing phantom of an impending examination to haunt them in their hours of study ; but they should read with the pleasing assurance that they are gaining knowledge ; and they should remember that student life is a period of preparation, not merely for the temporary trial in the examination hall, but also for the continued trial in the world outside.

শ্রীশ্রীবিশ্বনাথঃ শব্দং

স্বর্গতানাং লোকবরেণ্য-স্মর-গুরুদাস-বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়-
মহোদয়ানাং জন্মশতবার্ষিকী প্রশস্তিঃ

মহামহোপাধ্যায় শ্রীপ্রমথনাথ তর্কভূষণঃ

জাতো যো দ্বিজবাজনির্মলকুলে ভাস্বান্ স্বকীয়ৈর্গুণৈ-
-বাবল্যাং সদুদারপূতচবিতঃ প্রাপ প্রতিষ্ঠাং পবান্ ।
বিদ্যা যং পুরুষোত্তমং চিবনলকক্ষে শ্রিয়া সংযুতা
তস্যায়ং শতবাধিকোৎসববিধিভূষাদ্ ভুবঃ শ্রেয়সে ॥

পাশ্চাত্যোহখিলবাঙ্গমে কৃতগতির্যঃ সংশ্রিতাং পূর্বজৈঃ
শ্রদ্ধাপূতধিবা ন্যষেবত তথা বিদ্যাং পবাক্ষপবান্ ।
শ্রোতস্মার্ত্তবিধানপালনপৰো ধর্ম্মাসনে ন্যাযবান্
মূর্ত্তো ধর্ম্ম ইব ব্যবাজত সদা তস্য স্মৃতিজীযতাং ॥

আবির্ভূয পুনঃ পূবেব মহিতে বংশে ভবান্ ভাবতে
সত্যপ্রেমনয়ান্বিতে চ সততং যুক্তো হিতে কর্ণগি ।
পূর্ব্বেষাং সবর্ণো দৃঢ়ং কৃতপদো লোকস্য শিক্ষাণ্ডকঃ
কল্যাণং নিজজন্মভূমিজন্মুঘাং শশ্বদ্ বিধিতাং পবান্ ॥

Born in the pure and eminent family of a Brahmin, or of the Moon as it were, and shining by his own virtues like the Sun, blameless in life from his earliest days, good and noble-hearted, he attained the highest position among men Fortune joined to learning adorned this quest of men even as Shree and Saraswatee unite to

enhance the glory of the Supreme Being. May the celebration of the centenary of his birth promote the good of the world !

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Versed in all the branches of Western learning, he yet, with an intellect chastened by reverence, cultivated knowledge both secular and transcendental, which had been pursued by the forefathers of his race With zeal he performed the duties enjoined in the sacred books—the *Vedas* and the *Smritis* In the highest seat of justice, devoted to righteousness, he shone like *Dharma* incarnate May his memory ever flourish !

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Appearing again as before in an illustrious family in this land of *Bharata* and dedicated as ever to the mission of social good joined to truth, love and rectitude, firmly planting your feet in the path of your ancestors, a sage preceptor teaching mankind, may you accomplish the welfare of the people born in your mother land !

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THE MESSAGE OF SIR GOOROODASS

SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

When on all sides we come across homes of hunger and prisons of poverty it is the duty of every religious man to take up the challenge offered by them and remove these blots on our civilisation Religion, as we understand it from Sir Gooroodass, is not abstention from activity when there is so much pinching poverty, under-nourishment and disease He who tolerates wrongdoing for long or acquiesces in the wrong is himself a wrong-doer.

The central force of Sir Gooroodass's life of which all his other activities were an expression, was the equality of religion Sir Harcourt Butler said to him in 1915 that the ideals of Hinduism of which he was a great exponent contained perhaps the corrective of the world maladies He said this during the last war. Until the all-pervading materialism was knocked down, until building of societies rested on secure foundation of religion, there can be no peace To-day the world is noisier, more controversial and

more violent. There is more hope and more uncertainty, more aspiration and more frustration and the years that intervened showed utter bankruptcy of the religious spirit. The Versailles Treaty, the League of Nations and Disarmament Conference failed because they had not the background of public opinion to sustain them.

This war, again, when it is won, may prove to be the breeding ground of other wars if the peace is not saved. It can happen only if powerful nations cease to take pride and glory in possessions which are based on the shame and slavery of weaker nations. This is perhaps what Sir Harcourt meant when he said that the principles of Hinduism contain the essential elements for saving the world civilisation. Some of us might perhaps feel when we look at the cleavage caused by religion in this country and the world whether this is right. If anything is required for saving India and the world it is religion in its large, comprehensive and universal sense. Religion is not a mere routine or a ritual; it is not a state of scruples which will impede the very exercise of one's faculties; it is not a prejudice, superstition or a blind habit. It is the sheet anchor of the human soul in the Divine. It is the fight of the alone for the Alone.

SIR GOOROODASS AS A STUDENT

PROF HARANCHANDRA BANERJEE

My grandfather died when my father was barely three years old. He was thus deprived of paternal care in the formative period of life, and the financial position of the family was greatly embarrassed. Fortunately for himself, his mother was an ideal Hindu lady of the old school, content with plain living and completely resigned to the will of God, and possessing remarkable strength of character, which enabled her to face the severe calamity that befell her. She determined to give her son an English education on sound lines, and at the same time to bring him up in the strictly orthodox traditions of the family. He began his primary education in the village school situated near his house. He could not write correctly the letter “क,” the first consonant of the

Bengali alphabet, even after trying for two days; the vertical line of the letter was leaning towards the right. On the third day his mother very resolutely told the teacher that if her son could not write the letter correctly, she would neither give him leave nor give any food to her son. At noon the son went to his mother with tears in his eyes, and showed her the letter correctly written on his slate. Then she affectionately took him up in her arms and gave him food. The seed of perseverance thus sowed by his mother in his childhood made him resolute and indefatigable in after-life.

2 He received his first school education in the General Assembly's Institution (now the Scottish Church College). He was present at an Annual Re-Union of the old and new boys of the College, held shortly before his death, and addressed the audience, standing on the very spot in the central hall where he used to sit as a student in his class, and recited a piece of English poetry—the good old story of the Spider and the Fly—which he had read while he was in this school. After a few months of his admission, his maternal uncle, a man of position and means, got him into the Oriental Seminary, then known as Gour Mohan Auddy's School, and considered to be the best school in the northern part of the town. There he saw the celebrated Captain D. L. Richardson, who used to exercise so much influence on the minds of the “Young Bengal” of that time. His uncle wanted to keep him under his care, but his mother did not wish that her personal influence on her son should be allowed to diminish even by temporary absence. So he left the Oriental Seminary, and entered the Hare School, then known as the Collootola Branch School, located in an old building at the north-east corner of the present Presidency College grounds. Here he read for five years, covering eight classes in that time by double and triple promotions, and passing the University Entrance Examination in 1859, standing first from his school. While in the Hare school, he invariably occupied the first position in the successive annual examinations of the school.

3 The Head Master of the school, the late Babu Peary Churn Sircar, was one of the greatest teachers that Bengal has produced. My father used to think very highly of the elevating and ennobling influence which Peary Babu exercised on his pupils, and of his

varied scholarship and unique method of teaching. He attached great importance to class exercises in every branch of study, and insisted upon boys being given regular tasks both in the class and at home. These papers were carefully examined and the mistakes explained before the whole class, so that a boy not only knew what mistakes he had made, but he also profited by the mistakes of others. Peary Babu's method of teaching produced a lasting impression of the subjects taught on the minds of his pupils.

4. It is somewhat remarkable that my father had at first some difficulty in grasping the fundamental ideas of Geometry, and the Arabic or common system of Notation. When reading the fourth proposition of the first Book of Euclid (relating to the congruence of two triangles having two sides and the included angle of the one respectively equal to those of the other), he could not understand that the angles were named by three letters, the middle letter being placed at the vertex of the corresponding angle. This was explained to him in a very ingenious way by Babu Girishchandra Deb, a senior teacher of the Hare School, who happened to be present in the class in the course of his daily inspection when my father was attempting to prove the aforesaid proposition on the black board. He said to him—"Look here at the angle BAC," placing stress on the letter A while pronouncing it, and striking it with one end of a light stick which he used to carry in his hand. He repeated this method in the case of the other angles. This at once enabled my father to understand the principle of naming the angles.

5. He began to learn Sanskrit at a very early age under the tuition of a learned Pandit who for sometime lived in his house. He had a wonderful memory, and while yet a boy, he committed to heart the celebrated Sanskrit dictionary known as the *Amara-kosha*. He was a strong advocate of the cultivation of memory, but he condemned cramming. Notwithstanding the famous lines of Pope—

"Where memory prevails,

The solid power of understanding fails,"

he had a rare combination of memory and intelligence. He could cite off-hand and faultlessly English, Bengali and Sanskrit passages, prose and poetry, from books which he had read in his school and

college days. He subsequently read and committed to memory the well-known Sanskrit grammar *Mugdhabodha* under the guidance of Pandit Ramgati Nyayaratna, while he was a teacher in Mathematics in the Berhampur College

6 His handwriting was well-set, bold and clear. He could draw very neat and correct maps. A wall map of India and a small map of England executed by him are still preserved. They look exactly like printed maps. He was a strong advocate of map-drawing which, he said, greatly helped to develop control of the limbs and concentration of mind. He also said that the study of Geography greatly helped to stimulate the memory.

7. He used to say that the students in his days never depended on ready-made meaning-books and explanatory keys, but they tried to find out, with the help of a dictionary, the meanings of words in their English lessons, and entered them in their note-books. Regarding the advantages of this method, he says in his learned work, *A few Thoughts on Education*,—"In finding out from the dictionary the meaning of a word, the student has to read carefully the sentence in which it occurs, and to exercise his mind in ascertaining to what part of speech the word belongs, and which of the different meanings given in the dictionary will suit the context; this exercise affords no small training to the mental powers, while it is attended with pleasure each time the boy is able to hit a meaning which fits in with the context. The correct spelling of the words is also deeply impressed on the memory, while handwriting is improved at the same time."

8 He stood first from the Hare School in the Entrance Examination, and obtained a junior scholarship. He joined the first year class of the Presidency College, then located in the present Hindu School and Sanskrit College buildings, in 1860. He had a strong desire to join the Medical College. He told his mother that the medical profession was the noblest of all professions. She however told him that in studying medicine he would have to touch dead bodies, and she did not consider this fit and proper. As in the school, so in the college, he was a very industrious, hard working and diligent student. He had a superior intelligence, power of quick perception, and an honest and intense desire to improve. In the final F.A. Examination, he stood first in order of merit,

and obtained a senior scholarship. Babu Nilambar Mookerjee, who afterwards became the Prime Minister of H. H. the Maharaja of Kashmir, stood first from the Sanskrit College and second in order of merit in the Examination.

9 In 1862 my father joined the third year B.A. class of the Presidency College. The subjects of study and their respective Professors were as follows :—English literature—Mr. Lobb and Mr. Grappel; Mathematics—Mr. Stephenson; Philosophy—Mr. Jones; Logic—Mr. Saunders; History and occasionally English literature—Mr. Cowell; Bengali literature and grammar—Mr. Krishnakamal Bhattacharyya. He told us that all these subjects proved equally interesting to him. But history and Bengali literature were particularly interesting and instructive, owing to Mr. Cowell's and Krishnakamal Babu's remarkable method of teaching. Mr. Cowell made use of his vast erudition by referring to historical anecdotes and incidents. He lectured in the last period (three to four P.M.), and it often happened that he continued his lectures till after five, his pupils listening to him with rapt attention, showing neither fatigue nor restlessness. Krishnakamal Babu lectured on *Meghnada-Badha Kavya*, the celebrated epic poem of Michael Madhusudan Datta. He made his exposition of the poem very interesting and attractive by citing parallel passages from the works of great English and Sanskrit poets. It is a matter of great regret that Sanskrit was not included in the curriculum of any of the University Examinations in those days. My father often put searching critical questions to the learned Professor who sometimes could not answer them off hand. He was greatly impressed by the charming diction and elevating thoughts of the poem, and could recite faultlessly many cantos of it. In those days, B.A. class students of the Presidency College had to go to the Medical College for learning Anatomy and Physiology. My father did not touch dead bodies, but attentively looked at the anatomical demonstrations from a distance, and attended the lectures on Physiology, Medicine and Chemistry. He was greatly impressed by Dr. Macnamara's lectures in Chemistry which, he said, were most lucid and interesting.

10. He stood first in the B.A. Examination, 1864, and got the Burdwan Scholarship of fifty rupees a month. He stood also

first in Mathematics, Philosophy and Bengali literature. His rival Nilambar Babu stood first in English literature and History, and second in the B A. Examination. How my father could secure higher marks in Bengali literature than his rival Nilambar who was the best student of the Sanskrit College, was a wonder to the Professors, and also to my father himself. My father's knowledge of Logic was also of a high order.

11 Shortly after passing the B A Examination, he was appointed an Assistant Lecturer in Mathematics in the Presidency College on a monthly salary of Rs. 150. He had also to lecture on English literature, and he lectured on Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon* in the first year F A classes. The celebrated poet Nabinchandra Sen was one of his pupils in that class.

12. In 1865 he joined the M A. class in Mathematics in the Presidency College, his Professors being Principal Sutcliffe and Mr Stephenson. He stood first in the first class, and obtained the University Gold Medal. Nilambar Babu stood first in Sanskrit from the Sanskrit College, and obtained the University Gold Medal. The following incident shows my father's keen intelligence and ready wit. During the M.A. Examination which was then held in the Presidency College, he wanted to go out of the hall for a few minutes to attend a call of nature, and asked the permission of Professor Saunders who was acting as an invigilator. Mr. Saunders observed that it was against the rule. My father met the refusal of the Professor by quoting the following passage from Pope —

“ If, where the rules not far enough extend,
 Since rules were made but to promote their end,
 Some lucky license answer to the full
 The intent proposed, that license is a rule.”

Mr Saunders was so pleased with the ready, reasonable and witty retort, that the permission asked for was at once granted.

13. After passing the M A Examination in 1865, he was appointed for a short time a Professor of Mathematics in the Presidency College. He taught Mathematics in the First year classes, and had, among his pupils, Rameschandra Dutt, Biharilal Gupta and Anandamohan Barooah, who were the flowers of the Indian Civil Service in their time. He gave them home tasks in Mathematics which he examined with great care and corrected

in the presence of the class. Mr. Rameschandra Dutt did not show much inclination for work in Mathematics. When questioned one day by my father, he replied that he had no special aptitude for Mathematics, and so the subject did not interest him. My father mildly remonstrated with him, saying that no special genius was required for the study of F. A. Mathematics, but a little application was all that was necessary for successfully working out the exercises. Rameschandra bowed low, and began to work at the neglected subject in right earnest. It is a noteworthy fact that he stood first in Mathematics at the I. C. S. Examination, his examiner being the celebrated Mr. Isaac Todhunter.

14. In my father's time, a student was allowed to attend the first and second years' course of lectures of the B.L. Examination while reading for the M. A. Degree, and he followed this course. Some celebrated jurists and lawyers were his law teachers, namely Mr. Montriou, Mr. Goodeve, Mr. Boulnois, Babu Shyamacharan Sarkar and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Chandramadhab Ghose. While preparing for the B. L. Examination, my father was keeping late hours at night. This was noticed by his mother who asked him why he was working so hard, and she became somewhat anxious for his health. He replied that the subjects prescribed for the examination were many and difficult. A distant relation of his who lived near his house, told her that besides the aforesaid reason, there was another one, namely, the desire to stand first by preventing his very able rival Nilambar from overtopping him, and that this reason was not disclosed by him. Having come to know this, she asked him whether any such idea was lurking in his mind. On his replying in the affirmative, she told him that the occupation of the first place in the examination depended on his good fortune (*adrishṭa*), that is the result of his acts in his previous birth over which he had no control. It depended on the decision of an omniscient, unerring and absolutely impartial judge—the great and omnipotent arbiter of the destinies of all mankind. She further told him that as he had overtopped Nilambar in all the previous examinations, she would not at all be sorry if Nilambar came out first that time. My father fully appreciated his mother's words which were uttered from a very high moral stand-point that could seldom be reached by ordinary persons. They are in accordance

with the precept of Sri Krishna contained in the well-known verse of the *Gita*—

কর্মণ্যোবাধিকারস্তে না ফলেষু কদাচন ।

না কর্মফলহেতুর্ভূমী তে সঙ্গোহস্তুকর্মণি ॥

Your right is only to action (and so it is necessary for you to act), but know that you have never any right to the result (which entirely depends on the Lord; you cannot get it as you desire). Do not consider yourself as the cause of the result of your action. At the same time, let there be no attachment to inaction on your part (that is to say, you must act with the idea that the Lord will be pleased thereby; but you will have to leave the result to Him). He acted according to her advice, and curtailed his hours of study at night before the examination. Fortunately he retained his first place in the examination and obtained the University Gold Medal, Nilambar Babu coming next to him in order of merit.

15. He appeared in the Premchand Roychand Studentship Examination in February, 1868, that being the first time the examination was held. He took up five subjects, the maximum number allowed by the Syndicate, namely, English, Philosophy, History, Pure Mathematics and Mixed Mathematics, his rival Babu Asutosh Mookerjee taking up three subjects, namely, English, Philosophy and History. The report of the Board of Examiners was as follows :

The Premchand Roychand Studentship Examiners, having carefully gone over the results of each paper and of each subject, resolved to take into consideration no paper in which 40 per cent. of the aggregate marks had not been awarded. On this principle it was found that Asutosh Mookerjee obtained 1615 marks in three subjects out of a maximum of 3,000, and that Gooroodass Banerjee got 1562 marks in five subjects out of a maximum of 5000. The Examiners, therefore, resolved to recommend to the Syndicate to award the studentship to Asutosh Mookerjee.—(Sd/-) J. Barton, John D. Don, George Smith, F N Macnamara, J. Sutcliffe, H. Woodrow (Minutes for 1867-68, page 83). This was the first failure of my father in securing the first position in an examination of the Calcutta University. He told us that he keenly felt this disappointment, particularly because the resolution of the Board of Examiners to reject a paper in which 40 per cent. of the total marks had not been secured, was adopted *after* the examination, which was

not quite fair to the candidates Had he known of this resolution beforehand, he would have taken up only those three subjects in which he felt strong, namely, Philosophy, Pure Mathematics, and Mixed Mathematics However, his failure to get the studentship was for his ultimate good For, had he got it, his mother would have asked him to come back to his home from Berhampur where he was then staying as a Lecturer in Mathematics and Law in the Berhampur College, and was also practising in the Berhampur Court. In that case he would not have been able to study Sanskrit under Pandit Ramgati Nyayaratna who was the Lecturer in Sanskrit in the Berhampur College, and who taught him *Mugdhabodha* grammar and Sanskrit literature with great care and attention Moreover, had he joined the Calcutta High Court barely a year after he had begun his practice in the Berhampur Court, his practice in the former court would have been affected. So he told us that Divine Dispensation is always for our ultimate good, and we should have a very firm and unflinching faith in Providence under all circumstances, favourable or adverse

GOOROODASS BANERJEE AS I SAW HIM

RAI BAHADUR PROF KHAGENDRANATH MITRA

A little over a century ago, Gooroodass Banerjee was born in a small village in the suburbs of Calcutta of poor parents. His father was a clerk in a mercantile firm but died when Gooroodass was a little child of three years The task of bringing up Gooroodass fell on his mother Sonamani Devi who was a pious Brahmin lady of exceptional qualities of head and heart That the mother of Gooroodass fulfilled her self-imposed task all too well is evident from the successful educational training which was imparted to him In order to properly assess the achievement of this brilliant child, one must remember that English education was by no means so common or so cheap in those days as it is now It was thus practically impossible for men of moderate means to properly educate their children in those days The father of Gooroodass was not fortunate enough to receive any University education,

but Gooroodass's mother gave her son the highest university education that was available in this country. Gooroodass took the fullest advantage of it and carried off the highest prizes in almost all the university examinations. Naturally therefore his reputation as a brilliant scholar spread far and wide. But it is not his education and scholarship that won for him the hearts of his countrymen. It was rather the forgetfulness of it and the almost passionate attachment to the old Brahmanical ideals of his country that installed him in their hearts. The influence of English education and all that it stands for could not make Gooroodass flinch from that ideal even for a moment. This was regarded as something extraordinary, because in those days the influence of the West had swept most of the educated youngmen off their feet and it was very common to show a public defiance at the ancient traditions and culture of the land. Gooroodass combined in himself all that was best in the cultures of the East and the West, and was looked upon as the best fruit of English education in his days. That he did not wish to depart from the traditional culture of his people even under strong inducements is evident from a short story which is told of Gooroodass's interview with Lord Curzon. After the death of Queen Victoria, Lord Curzon invited some of the most distinguished Indians including Gooroodass Banerjee to represent this country at the Coronation ceremony. Lord Curzon was not perhaps surprised at the refusal of Gooroodass Banerjee to proceed to England which is regarded as a violation of the letter of Hindu scriptures. Lord Curzon remarked that his going to England would, no doubt, mean a great loss to Hinduism and to Hindu community. But Gooroodass replied, 'No, my Lord; it will be no loss to the Hindu community if a man like me or hundreds like me leave this community but it will certainly mean a tremendous loss to me personally.' Such was the great respect in which Gooroodass held his religion.

• In estimating the character of Gooroodass Banerjee we sometimes forget the conditions of society which prevailed in the middle of the last century. It certainly required considerable courage and spiritual firmness to cling to the religion and customs of the Hindus in those days, because the Christian missionaries were indefatigable in their attacks on the strongholds of Hinduism.

The minds of 'Young Bengal' were also strongly exercised by the many inherent inconsistencies and contradictions which they pointed out in the old religious systems of the country. No doubt, the social reformers of the last century, gifted speakers like Sasadhara Tarkachuramani and Krishnaprasanna Sen and forceful writers like Bankimchandra, Vivekananda and others tried to rally the elements of ancient culture and reinstate them in their proper perspective; still the force of the onslaughts made the fabrics of society reel and the result was the establishment of the rationalistic 'schism,' namely, the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj was certainly a sort of spiritual reaction against the flood of Western influence and of Christianity in particular or rather it tried to meet halfway the violence of the shock, but this new reformation touched only the surface of the Hindu society. It was only the educated few who responded to the preachings of the Brahmo reformers. So far as the masses were concerned, the Hindu mind was intact—perhaps a little timid and vacillating; but the heart was in its right place with its age-long tradition. Sir Gooroodass Banerjee's contribution in this sphere was the tremendous influence he brought to bear on the masses by his brilliant example. As a man universally respected for his character and as one possessing the highest academic distinctions, he was looked upon as an authoritative exponent of the culture of the East. As a matter of fact standing like a solid rock in the midst of a sea of passions, prejudices and hypocrisy, Gooroodass came to occupy quite spontaneously a unique position in the eyes of the public. The importance of such an example in those days of vacillations and doubts cannot be exaggerated. In his life he was simple and docile, but courageous and firm; he wanted nothing, cared for nothing and feared nothing. He exemplified in his person the ideal which consisted in the natural strength of the spirit (নান্নানববাদেষং) He was the pink of courtesy almost on the verge of being nervous, but he was at the same time unapproachable on account of the awe which his indomitable spirit inspired—অধ্যাক্ষাতিগম্য চ যাদোরচৈববিবর্গবঃ as the poet says. I have had the privilege of enjoying his friendship for a good many years and I felt when I was in his company that all petty considerations of the self and all littleness and vanity vanished like mist. He was a great man, because he wanted his

country to be great ; he wanted everyman to be pure in mind and body and self-centred in spirit. He had an ideal in life and whenever an opportunity offered itself—and opportunities were by no means few and far between—he held the attention of his audience focussed on that ideal with untiring zeal. He was quiet, gentle and peace-loving because he had conquered his passions and attained an equilibrium of all his faculties as very few had done. He detested conflict and quarrel by nature and whenever there was a possibility of the warring elements of human nature coming on the surface, he always tried to pour oil over troubled waters. He ceaselessly worked for peace and harmony and the result was that the fighting instinct among his contemporaries often disappeared before any intervention on his part was necessary. I noticed it at the Calcutta University Institute when I happened to be its Secretary and Sir Gooroodass one of its Presidents. Almost every evening his small figure could be seen at the Institute surrounded by multitudes of students who indulged in all sorts of discussion with him up till eleven o'clock at night sometimes. Ever since the foundation of the Society for the Higher Training of young men for the benefit of the college students of Calcutta, he was a prominent member of this body when it was founded in the early nineties of the last century. Till the last day of his life Sir Gooroodass worked for this Society the name of which had been changed subsequently into the Calcutta University Institute. This last name was by no means a happy one, because it had nothing to do with the Calcutta University except that it was to serve as the meeting place of the students of that University. It was from the very beginning conceived as a club for the recreation of the thousands of college students who flocked to this great wilderness of a city. It was here that Gooroodass made his presence felt. Students who joined the Institute adored him as they adored nobody else and profited immensely both by his precept and example. His beaming countenance reflected the light that was within. This light which was nothing but the spotless character and the purity of life he led, served to illumine the paths of many a young soul who came into contact with Gooroodass Banerjee. His benign presence was the greatest asset to his young friends and he felt an inner urge to come to the Institute frequently and to give the young hopefuls

of the country the benefit of his company and counsel. His magnetic personality attracted hundreds of young men whom he never ceased to inspire. I have said before that he was always for harmony and peace and his many efforts at compromises often succeeded in dispelling doubts and ill feelings. This often led people to misunderstand Sir Gooroodass. People thought that he was not firm ; that he was soft-hearted and even time-server. But nothing can be further from the truth. He was undoubtedly for compromise, so far as compromise was calculated to restore peace and goodwill whenever that was possible on the plane of truth and justice, but Gooroodass never compromised with truth and never flinched from the path of rectitude. He hated falsehoods and shams.

He was small in size but his personality was almost overwhelming. He was the possessor of sweet, affable manners but he was adamant in principle. His was the sort of personality which would never tolerate hypocrisy. A man of simple unostentatious manners, he loved unsophisticated youngmen who were candid and simple in their nature.

I had the privilege of coming into close contact with him mainly in connection with the Calcutta University Institute and I can say without any hesitation that he yielded to none in his love for the younger generation. I was then also a youngman who had scarcely passed his 30th year and I shall always remember with gratitude the debt which I personally owed to him for his manifold acts of kindness, the greatest among which was the influence of his personality. He turned the bull's eye lantern of his noble ideal on persons like myself who were fortunate enough to enjoy his confidence. He never spoke evil of any one, but was always loud in his praise of any good action or quality which he found in others. There is a valuable precept in the sacred books of the Hindus that even God cannot save those who indulge in speaking evil of others. Gooroodass exemplified this in his own life as very few have done. He never sought favours from anybody and so had no disappointments in life. The keynote of his character so far as I was able to understand him is contained in this well-known couplet of the *Gītā*

ন প্রহৃষ্যৎ প্রিয়ং প্রাপ্য নোদ্বিজ্যৎ প্রাপ্য চাপ্রিয়ম্ ।

স্থিৰবুদ্ধিবসং মূঢ়ো ব্রহ্মবিদ্ ব্রহ্মণি স্থিতঃ ॥ ৫ম অব্যায়

He was a self-centred man and his life and teachings always breathed peace and contentment. I can remember many instances in which his mind was unruffled even in the midst of the most trying circumstances. This is exactly where the influence of his religion was most evident. Many people in these days of so-called enlightenment regard religion to be a useless fad of the uncritical minds and Hinduism a bundle of superstitions. To these people Gooroodass's adherence to the faith of his fore-fathers may seem to be unintelligible and even anachronistic but his spirit of toleration, his magnanimity of character and, above all, his good will cannot fail to have their appeal. That Gooroodass's character has a universal appeal is not in spite of his religion but due directly to his religion. Here again we feel tempted to quote the *Gītā* which was a never failing source of Gooroodass's inspiration.

শ্রোয়ান্ স্বধৰ্মো বিগুণঃ পৰধৰ্মাৎ অনুষ্ঠিতাৎ ।

স্বধৰ্মে নিবনং শ্রোয়ঃ পৰধৰ্মো ভয়াবহঃ ॥ এত অধ্যায় ॥

One's own religion (or duty), even if somewhat imperfectly fulfilled is far more preferable than a religion (or duty) which may appear to be easier and more perfect but which is not one's own.

SIR GOOROODASS BANERJEE

(26th January, 1844—2nd December, 1918)

PROF. SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI

After having arrived at the wrong side of 50, one is in a position to take a retrospective view of his life, and can appraise from a proper distant perspective the various forces and influences that operated in the shaping of his character and career. In the case of the present writer, whose career has been the fairly uneventful one of a teacher, and therefore of no special significance in the domain of current events and current politics, such a retrospective appraisal can only have a subjective value, with but a very limited appeal for a narrow group within the same social circle; and to this we might add the documentary interest of such an appraisal for a stray student of some human science. Yet

it has struck me as the only suitable way to record my personal reactions to my contact with Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, and in this manner bear my humble testimony to his great qualities as a Man, as an Educator, and as a Leader of his people for well-nigh thirty years—the last decade of the 19th century and the greater part of the first two decades of the 20th

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As a Bengali youth of the middle classes of Calcutta with a narrow Bengali *bougeois* outlook and atmosphere, where we were desperately trying to hitch our wagon to a star, it was my very great privilege, while still within my teens, to come in touch with some of the finest spirits within the academical circles of Calcutta. Three of these were my teachers, whom I could meet mostly in the class room. They were, Professor Manmohan Ghosh, Professor Hugh Melville Percival, and Professor Benoyendranath Sen, under whom I studied in the Presidency College; and Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, who was one of the guiding spirits of that great club for college students of Calcutta in those days, the Calcutta University Institute. Professor Sen I studied with only for two years, but he was the popular Secretary of the Institute, and as a prominent student member of the Institute, I was fortunate enough to be able to continue my contact with him nearly to the end of my college days. My great good fortune in coming to know Rabindranath Tagore came to me later, after I had left college; and a very close contact with the illustrious poet, one of the greatest intellectual and cultural benefits in my life, was granted to me by Providence from the period of my sojourn as a student in England, from 1920 onwards, particularly during my visit to Malaya, Java, Bali and Siam in his company in the autumn of 1927. Looking back upon my student days thirty years and more from now, I can now realise what precious influences for the elevation of my intellectual and moral, even spiritual make up, were exerted by these teachers of mine, and by Sir Gooroodass as well. Later in life, I had occasion to see a bit of the world, both at home in India and abroad, and to come in touch both prolonged and transitory with some of the best minds and characters—my foreign teachers some of them; and I could take in a lot of ideas and impressions, only to be ingrafted on the plant that had been nurtured on the native soil of

my character and my intellectual being that drew their sustenance to a large extent from the influences unconsciously shed by these revered masters of my youth. Amid the blurred and dimmed shades and shapes that crowd and mass themselves in the distant days of my youth, the figure of Sir Gooroodass stands out, with a few others, clear and distinct, shining with the light of his own personality and character, and marked off from the rest.

It sometimes happens that in a curious way we come to visualise an abstract principle in some individual whom we know and who has acquired a reputation (enviable or otherwise) for a particular virtue or attitude or outlook. Sometimes our literary men build up imaginary types as incarnations, so to say, of these principles or characters; as, for example, John Bull, or Uncle Sam, or Cathleen Ni Houlihan, or Uriah Heep, or Mr Micawber. But in our life, not infrequently, some of the living men and women we know, insignificant people or people prominent in the public eye, stand out irresistibly as embodiments of some idea—some virtue or vice or idiosyncrasy; and such people invariably attract the attention of all and sundry, particularly of those gifted with a lively imagination. Among the great men that I had the good fortune to know, I can mention just two such personalities. A mere mention of the name of the great Sir Asutosh Mookerjee would at once evoke to those who knew him intimately, or even to those who watched his personality and career from a distance, a certain robust manliness and independence which was impatient of restraint, an ardent and active spirit which found its pleasure in incessant work, and a certain type of generosity which had a dash of the truly democratic about it—qualities which obtained for him the sobriquet of “The Bengal Tiger.” So after my first contact with Sir Gooroodass when I was a first-year student at college and a member of the Calcutta University Institute, a lad of 16 who was eager to read and to know, the impression I formed of him remained to be confirmed through later years of close acquaintance. He seemed from the outset to be the physical embodiment of that uncertain but very persistent (if frequently inconvenient) thing, our moral conscience: ‘the still, small voice’ within our mind, restraining us from vice,

making us feel uncomfortable within ourselves, somehow seemed to find a suitable incarnation—a refreshingly genial and sympathetic one, too—in the slight, even rather frail physiognomy and the gentle eyes and still more gentle voice of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee. His irreproachable public life, his life of the ideal Hindu householder in which the loving and dutiful son was transformed into the just and ever vigilant *paterfamilias*, and above all, where we were concerned most, his position as the unfailing friend, philosopher and guide of the young men who came in touch with him,—all these seemed very well to square with the very high moral ideals which seemed to find their most natural abode in his personality, and to make it appear to us to be perfectly natural that we should connect his individuality with integrity of character and conscience. As carefree college youngsters in their teens, it was not that we did not include even the venerable personality of Sir Gooroodass in the list of persons, our superiors and elders, whom we would caricature in a spirit of hilarious frolic. But we instinctively felt, most of us, that before Sir Gooroodass we were in presence of a being far different from the rest we knew—with a few exceptions; that it was unmanly and improper to have any mean thought or action in dealing with him (and we had to deal with him frequently in connexion with the affairs of the Institute) What captivated us was the palpable sincerity of the man—his genuine desire to stand by us, to take us by the hand and to lead us to what was good for us, even though we did not understand it; and we were at times ashamed of ourselves when we realised what great confidence he had in us. Confidence begets confidence—and during the six years of my connexion with the Calcutta University Institute as a junior member, I think the general impression among the young men of the Institute was that (apart from Professor Benoyendranath Sen) Sir Gooroodass was their best friend to whom they could freely go for advice and guidance in their difficulties. And yet Sir Gooroodass, with some of his mid-Victorian notions making him something of a precisian, was not the person to talk in a hail-fellow style to the youngsters. He believed in the dictum of the old sage Chanakya, that ‘when a boy has attained his 16th year, treat him as a friend’ and this Sir Gooroodass did, and he further treated him as a gentleman also.

We could never catch him addressing even the fresher at college, a lad perhaps not yet 15, with the familiar pronoun *tumi* : he would persist in addressing all and sundry as *āpmi*, the honorific term of address, even when the boys and young men would feel they would be more at ease if he addressed them as *tumi*. But he insisted on taking them in their dignity as gentlemen—as men with a sense of responsibility—who can only be properly addressed by *āpmi*, and not as irresponsible school-boys, for whom the *tumi*-style was quite in order. Sir Gooroodass, we all knew, was a strict moralist ; but he was not a prig, and he did not do any ostentatious parade of his morality. Here again the contrast with one or two other persons of note in Calcutta was very much in evidence. He was sweetly reasonable in all humility, and never a self-appointed preacher

With its exceedingly limited opportunities, the Bengali middle class did not (and does not even now) possess much scope to distinguish itself. The world most emphatically is not in front of it. On the contrary, it finds its narrow world surrounded by high and insurmountable walls of political and economic bondage. A middle class Bengali youth could not aspire to be a military or a naval officer, —certain public services were barred to him ; and the economic situation would not allow him to be a manufacturer or a merchant on a large scale. The only avenues of distinction were certain subordinate branches of the public service (a fortunate few only could aspire to the higher services), and the professions of law, medicine and education. Sir Gooroodass by sheer competence and force of character attained to the highest offices which were open to a Bengali of the last generation. From a practising lawyer at the High Court in Calcutta he was made a Judge, and his services in the cause of education (as Professor in Berhampore and Calcutta, as Tagore Law Lecturer in the University, and as member of the Senate and the Syndicate of the University of Calcutta) were given their proper appreciation when he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University, the first Indian to be so honoured. To the lay public and to the uneducated people, Sir Gooroodass's greatest claim to distinction was that he was a High Court Judge. I remember how in my school-boy days when passing by Sir Gooroodass's residence in Narikeldanga somebody

pointed out with awe that that was the house of the " Judge Gooroodass " Sir Gooroodass's distinction as a lawyer and as an administrator of the law is well-known ; his contribution to the study of certain aspects of Hindu Law (as in the Tagore Law Lectures, for instance) is also quite noteworthy. But I think his real place in the galaxy of present-day Indian worthies is as an Educationist. He began life as a teacher—he was connected with three important colleges in Bengal ; and his most abiding work appears to have been done in the University, and among the students in the Institute

Sir Gooroodass was not a voluminous writer. Apart from his Tagore Lectures, he has left behind him two books, one in English (*A Few Thoughts on Education* . Second edition, 1910) and the other in Bengali (*Jñān o Karma*, Second Edition, 1913), giving his views, opinions and experiences in the domain of education and higher culture. Among my treasured possessions are copies of these two books which Sir Gooroodass made gifts of to me with his own autograph. The English work is a detailed study of the training of boys and youth, and is a not too small work of some 350 pages, discussing from all aspects Education in Infancy, Education in Boyhood, Education in Youth, and Professional and Technical Education. The book takes note of actualities and is intended to be eminently practical. *Jñān o Karma* is more philosophical, and in certain ways it is an exposition and a defence of the Hindu View of Life, as Sir Gooroodass as a modern educated Bengali Hindu conceived it to be. The modern conditions of life are never lost sight of, and it is a well-written and thought-provoking piece of serious literature in Bengali, sustaining its interest all through to 450 pages. Sir Gooroodass found opportunities to put to use his thoughts on education when he was a member of the Indian Universities Commission, which helped to usher a new era in higher education in Bengal and India through the University of Calcutta, and when he helped to establish the National Council of Education in Bengal, a body set up independently of the government controlled University of Calcutta to give education along national and nation-building lines to the youth of Bengal. Before being made a Judge of the High Court in 1888, he served on the officially appointed Legislative Council of Bengal for two years,

1886-1888, and this was in those days a token of high appreciation by government of his legal competence and his personality

Sir Gooroodass was a staunch patriot—as all good Hindus are bound to be. His patriotism embraced the whole of India his spiritual as well as physical fatherland was not his own province, but India—the India of the Aryas. He manifested his great love for his land and his people in many ways : and in his own special domain of education, it showed itself when he took an active part in the affairs of the National Council of Education in Bengal. He thought in terms of Pan-India : and in one little thing, not understood in Bengal in its proper perspective, this made itself quite clear. He was a staunch advocate of the Pan-Indian Devanagari script to write and print Sanskrit, to the exclusion of the provincial Bengali, he wanted Bengali students to acquire a correct or at least a better articulation of the Language of the Gods, abandoning the Bengali habit of vernacularising Sanskrit in reading and chanting ; and he championed the employment of the Devanagari alphabet in the University examinations, by the Bengali and other candidates whose native script is different from the Devanagari—a very very desirable bit of reform which has been adopted sometime ago by the University of Dacca. He wrote a little book intending to make easy the acquirement of Devanagari by Bengali students. It was however based partly on a mistaken assumption that the Bengali script was an offspring of the Devanagari—a view which, as he told me once, he had abandoned as soon as he found it was not correct. In his Bengali book his Sanskrit quotations are all given in Devanagari. All this shows he thought of India, and not of Bengal alone

In his educational outlook, Sir Gooroodass wanted to build on the basis of Hindu culture and Hindu values, which he thought were of universal application and would hold, if suitably modified, for all time. In this respect he is a worthy contemporary of such great thought-leaders of Hindu India as Bankimchandra Chatterji, Bhudeva Mukherji and Swami Vivekananda. But Sir Gooroodass's attitude was more orthodox ; and in this he was in greater agreement with Bhudeva Mukherji. His was not the dynamic vigour

of Swami Vivekananda who was consumed by his burning desire to see the masses of India come to their own through the path of Vedanta which saw God in Man. Neither was Sir Gooroodass the man of imagination which the novelist Bankim was. But like Bhudeva Mukherji, he believed in living the life of the orthodox Brahmin householder, following meticulously all his religious and social duties and obligations, and seeking to make the light shine through his own life.

āpani ācari' dharma, āna-ke śikhāy

‘ he teaches others, following the Right Life himself ’

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And here the earnestness and sincerity of Sir Gooroodass were crystal clear. In the narrow path of living the life of an orthodox Brahmin, the life that Sir Gooroodass had placed before him as an ideal, he would never spare himself. I have a recollection of his having once told us that during a long railway journey (it was to Madras from Calcutta), for 24 hours he did not eat or drink anything, as orthodox Brahmins are wont to abstain from taking food during journeys. and with a twinkle of boyish triumph, he told us he did not feel much discomfort, while some of his fellow-travellers gorged themselves with food and yet seemed to be physically no better than he was from the effects of the journey. But it was not blind formalism that we could love in him : it was his conviction in certain serious questions of life, his sense of Realisation. In our college days, Brahmin students still used to be regular in performing their religious duties (the *Sandhyā* worship, morning and evening), although a great many were giving up this ceremonial worship (or *any* worship, for the matter of that). Now-a-days it would be rare to find a college student who performs his *Sandhyā* ritual : and a large percentage of Brahmin students are at the present day careless about wearing their sacred thread—the *yajño-pavita*—I should say, more than half have no use for it now a state of things which would have shocked and pained Sir Gooroodass, orthodox Brahmin that he was. The present writer began as an orthodox and dutiful Brahmin youth after his *upanayana* or initiation in his school days, and kept up the regular performance of the ritual till the third year of his college, when he gave it up. He gave it up both as a matter of convenience,

and because he came to question the spiritual utility of some of the Vedic verses he had to repeat, *eg*, those dealing with the sanctity of the waters (Now at a more advanced age he holds other opinions about the ritual, and he is becoming once more convinced about the importance of cultivating the habit of *regular* and *formal* prayer every day). He vividly remembers how he had a heart-to-heart talk with Sir Gooroodass about his doubts.

Sir Gooroodass was evidently pained at the thought of a Brahman young man back-sliding by being remiss in his religious duties, and he tried to explain to me the meaning of the very verses which I thought had no deeper import 'We start with the praise of the waters, of course,' he said, 'because water is so very vital for our physical well-being; but the Vedic sages do not stop there; they want us to use the good things of life—the bounty of Nature typified by water—so that we may prepare ourselves for the higher life, for realising the ultimate Reality, the Supreme Wealth or Well-being.' And then he explained to us the verse:

*āpō hi sthā mayō-bhuvā-
stā na ūjē dadhātana,
mahē ranāya caksasē.*

'O ye Waters, ye are the source of well-being;
do ye hold them (your virtues) for our strength-to-work,
(and) for visualising the Great Bliss'

The vision of the Bliss—the Divine Great Bliss—*mahē ranāya caksasē*—that, Sir Gooroodass explained to us, was the thing which the Vedic sages saw behind the blissful, earthly waters. And in the course of his argument, when he repeated these immortal words from the Veda, there was a ring of conviction which was startling, in its intensity of Realisation, for a callow college youngster who was getting too cocksure of himself and his notions acquired secondhand from books and imperfectly digested. I shall never forget the tone in which Sir Gooroodass uttered the verse, and particularly the final portion of it. Here was one, I could not help feeling instinctively, who had some sort of Realisation or Assurance which was beyond my horizon; and I could not but hold down my head in homage before something great and abiding which I did not understand but which I believed in. I had observed a similar note of conviction on another occasion, when a *Sannyāsī*,

a religious recluse, in the Sankaracharya Monastery at Puri, a man who like *Purun Bhagat* of Rudyard Kipling had given up the world in the prime of his life when he was the *diwan* or chief minister and executive officer of a feudatory state in Orissa, read and explained for our benefit the passage—

sa āksata . ēkō 'ham, bahus syām

(‘ He pondered . “ I am One, may I become Many.” ’)

This short talk on an autumn afternoon in the old quarters of the Calcutta University Institute in the east wing of the Sanskrit College and Hindu School buildings long long ago gave me not only an unexpected glimpse of Sir Gooroodass’s inner being, but also made me realise that the spark from Heaven does really fall, and it is well worth waiting for.

But Sir Gooroodass was not the austere sage and saint—he was also the scholar and man of letters, and he knew how to appreciate a good play provided it was produced in the proper atmosphere of studentdom. The University Institute performances of English and Bengali plays were regular events of the year in the social and cultural life of Bengali Calcutta, and these had reached a very high level of excellence, when Sisirkumar Bhaduri, Shailesh Banerji, Nareshchandra Mitra, Kantichandra Mukherji, Raghavendra Banerji, Sarojkumar Mukherji, and others, well-known in our days in the student-world of Calcutta for histrionic talents, used to perform. Some of them later took up the public stage and the screen as their profession, and in this way they brought a revolution in the Bengali theatre and cinema. Sir Gooroodass used to evince a keen interest in the performances, from the first selection of the book, then its editing for the Institute performance, then the final performance and the final distribution of medals to the most successful actors. And his approbation, as just and scholarly, was always sincerely sought after. On occasion, he was a little too severe, perhaps unduly severe, for some alleged indiscipline and unbecomingness; but as soon as he realised that his severity was based on wrong impression, he made amends publicly by exonerating those who came in for his criticism and apologising for his hastiness. This kind of thing endeared him to all the young men of the Institute, who all agreed that “ good old Sir Gooroodass ” was one of nature’s

gentlemen, whose rebuke seemed to evince a paternal solicitude for our welfare.

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With all great men, it always happens that a number of anecdotes come to gather round their names. These anecdotes are sometimes true in event, and sometimes not; but they are always true in spirit. Some of these pass current among all nations, and become the heritage of Humanity; their appeal is universal. George Washington and his axe; General Kosciusko's horse; Julius Caesar's *veni vidi vici*; Alexander the Great and the Gordian Knot, Alexander and the Indian King Poros, Alexander and his Physician; Robert Bruce and the Spider; Alfred the Great and the Burnt Cakes, Sivaji and the captured Wife of the Mogul Commander; these, and similar hundreds of stories and episodes, form the real romance of human history and human character. Sir Gooroodass, like his great contemporaries Iswarchandra Vidyasagara, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Bankimchandra Chatterji and others, is also the hero of a number of anecdotes. They are slight ones, no doubt, but they show the man in himself. We all like the story of Sir Gooroodass, the Judge of the High Court, being accosted by a humble widow, who took him to be just a poor Brahman priest, and being requested by her to perform the special *pūjā* of the Goddess Lakshmi in her home as her family priest was not coming and it was getting very late, for the usual *dakṣinā* or fee of a few coppers; and Sir Gooroodass, whose name was pronounced with awe and who was then a distinguished pleader, readily obliged the old lady and performed the *pūjā* and took home to his waiting mother the few handfuls of moist rice and slices of fruit from the offerings that were the priest's due. There are stories of his widowed mother's great solicitude for her son, and of the son's evincing the highest respect and the deepest love for his mother. And we think it quite typical of Sir Gooroodass with his scrupulous notions of honesty in public life that he should make his son, who was a lawyer practising at the High Court, take a solemn oath by touching his father's feet and forswear ever appearing in a case in his father's court and in this way preclude the possibility of any judicial impropriety taking place even unwittingly from his side as a judge.

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Such was, to give a few glimpses of his fine personality, Gooroodass the man : mild and gentle in his manness, strong in his faith, convinced of the greatness and the enduring qualities of the way of thought and the way of life laid down by his ancestors, a true lover of youth, and a true lover of his people, whom he sought to serve in the domain of culture and knowledge. If ever a man could be characterised as shedding 'sweetness and light' all around him, if ever a man had the unseen halo of greatness a spiritual life round his head, it was certainly Sir Gooroodass. His memory can never fade with those who knew him ; and those who did not know him will in the days to come find in him one of the leaders and makers of Modern Bengal and Modern India, when they read the history of their country's progress—a history which is yet to be written. The following Sanskrit verse quoted on the

pedestal below his marble bust in the Senate Hall of the University of Calcutta gives his ideal in life, an ideal which neither age nor difference in clime will be able to dim or belittle :

kurusva dēha-śuddhiṇca

citta-śuddhiṇca yatnatah :

tyaja prēyō, bhaja śīēyaś,

śāśvata-sukha-siddhayē.

‘ With care, keep your body pure, and your mind pure : give up that which is merely pleasing, follow that which is abidingly good, to attain to the Eternal Bliss.’

SIR GOOROODASS AND INDIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

We meet here in the midst of world-wide conflagration when the different nations of the globe are fighting with one another, either as aggressors or defenders of their political freedom. While we all feel anxious, worried and excited over the trend of events and the result of the war, we fail to remember one thing : We forget that the cultural conquest is worse than the political conquest, that the self-abdication of national self-respect is a greater calamity than any loss of political liberty. When political freedom is lost, there may be the chance of recovering that, but if a nation's culture is lost, that nation is doomed for ever. When political freedom is lost, the body of the nation is in bondage, but if the people forget or lose faith in their culture, the soul of the nation is crushed, the spirit of the country is killed, and there remains no longer any chance of the revival of the nation

With the advent of the Western civilisation, following in the wake of British conquest of India, that was the danger that threatened our country. At that time there were—specially amongst the English-educated people—intellectual anarchy, moral chaos, spiritual disorder, lack of faith in the country's past, and a mad eagerness to drink in the new wine of the West. But the history of India shows that in every period of national crisis, the country

has shown wonderful vitality and power of resistance. In the latest crisis also, India produced some saints, some religious reformers whose life, example and teachings were a strong bulwark against the danger that threatened us. And there were also individual characters who in their own way did the same service to the nation. It will be universally admitted that Sir Gooroodass was one of them.

Many amongst the younger generation, I am afraid, do not know much about him, but there was a time when the influence of his life and example was a great power and strength, a great national asset. Many interesting episodes of his life, showing his great love for the ancient ideals of our country, travelled even to remote villages and inspired hundreds and hundreds of people with bright hopes for the future

Friends, I am not for exact revival of the past—for the simple reason that it is not possible. The child inherits the characteristics of the father, but the child is not what the father was. You cannot get back the past exactly as it was, but you can derive inspiration from the past. From the past through the present to the future we go. So does a nation or a country. A philosopher once said that his heart was in the past, his body in the present and his soul in the future. The country which has not its past, which is ashamed of its past, cannot have its future. Sometimes it is heard that too much looking to the past has been the cause of the degeneration of India. Those who hold such opinions forget that if you cut yourself from the main stream, your life runs dry, and your degeneration is complete when you do not feel the misery of degeneration. Here we must say that I do not deny the necessity of keeping our mind open to new influences, new thoughts and new ideas when they are good, healthy and beneficial. But surely we cannot reject the past without serious detriment to the welfare of the nation.

Sir Gooroodass represented the best of the East and the West. He was a wonderful combination of the old and the new. His was a bright intellect, he occupied a unique place in the cultural life of Bengal—nay, of India—but withal he was a simple, unassuming Brahmin, with his great love for the Ganges and the *Gītā*, with his steadfast devotion to the daily *Pūjā* and an un-

wavering respect for our past traditions and customs. But how much strength and power did that frail, humble, innocent-looking little man possess. When everything in the air whispered to our ears about the futility of our culture and heritage, our past thoughts and knowledge, ancient traditions and customs, he held fast to them with superhuman tenacity. If nowadays some at least amongst our countrymen have learnt to give proper value to the past achievement of India, if there is national self-consciousness—in the wider sense of the term—at least in some quarters, to that the contribution of this great son of Bengal in whose name we have assembled here was not insignificant.

Some of you will perhaps say, "What is the place of India in the comity of nations? While other nations are showing examples of tremendous power and great vitality, India is pining in poverty and ignorance, distress and misery, starvation—semi or complete." Nobody denies the necessity of putting our foot foremost in remedying them. As a matter of fact these are the things that call for our urgent attention. But we must not also forget that we do not live by bread alone. The present condition of the world clearly shows that if all the time we are thinking in terms of the animal in man and not of any higher ideals, we are courting a great disaster. India even in her apparently feeble life-current bears testimony to the fact that if you evaluate life only in terms of the biological principle of struggle for existence, your life will soon cease to flow. That is what has been happening nowadays. All high ideals—moral and intellectual, religious and spiritual—have been thrown to the winds, and there is going on a diabolical dance of destruction all over the world.

It has been said, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. India, amidst all trials and tribulations, through thousands of failures, have not ceased to judge life except by the highest standard. It was the opinion of a great son of India that if India dies, then from the world all moral perfection will be extinct, spiritual ideals will be extinct, culture and civilisation in the highest sense, will be extinct. If this is true, those in whose life there have been the signs and indications that India is not dead and India will not die deserve our unfailing attention, admiration and respect. And certainly Sir Gooroodass was one of those blessed sons of India.

SIR GOOROODASS BANERJEE, M.A , D L —A STUDY

RAI BAHADUR BIJAYBIHARI MUKHERJI

Gooroodass Banerjee is a name to conjure with. The latter half of the nineteenth century brought out a galaxy of talents. One of the most luminous was Sir Gooroodass Banerjee. He, however, was a *sur-generis*—a class by himself. Few men had such a large circle of devoted admirers as he had. No man of his generation had fewer detractors, if any, than he. There was no sphere of activity of the national life at the time which he did not join. There was no sphere which he joined that did not receive a conspicuously added lustre by his presence. At the time he lived he was at the apex not merely of national admiration but was also at the apex of emotional devotion of his countrymen. When he left this world he left the memory of a Lamp of Gold put out. The memory continues to draw love, adoration and reverence in an unstinted measure. He was a typical Bengalee at his highest, at his best, a typical Brahmin, a typical Indian and a typical man who can hold his own with the highest and the best of humanity in any part of the world.

His family belonged to Bora in the sub-division of Diamond Harbour in the District of 24-Parganas. His grandfather Manik-chandra Banerjee came to Calcutta in quest of employment, secured one and settled down at Narikeldanga where he built a small home. His father Kanailal Banerjee was a clerk in the office of Carr, Tagore & Co. Sir Gooroodass was born in 1844 and his father died in 1847. The one memory of this affectionate father that lingered was the recitation by him of the rhymes of *Gītā* with this child on his lap. One of the great regrets of Sir Gooroodass in his adult years was that he lost the copy of the *Gītā* that bore his father's initials. The book was lost no doubt. It was regrettable. But his country knows that *Gītā* was not lost. It trekked its way to the very marrow of his bones. He read *Gītā*. He recited *Gītā*. He preached *Gītā*. He lived *Gītā*. Throughout his life and even, as the chronicles read, when he was bidding adieu to it it was the *Gītā* that inspired and it was the *Gītā* that showed him the light amidst the dark paths of life. Psychologists must analyse. Biologists must discuss. Teachers of youths must ponder. Let

leaders of thought on *Eugenics Euppsychichs* analyse the data and discover the relative contributions of heredity and environment. How in this particular case associated reflexes were established which Pavlov called 'conditioning' must be matters for study and deep study. But the Hindu knows that it was the home and the heredity that were typical that had produced a Ramkrishna, a Vidyasagar, or a Chaitanya—frugal, quiet, and God-conscious—which point to the evolution. Sir Gooroodass, deprived of the main support and guide was left as a lonely child in a family where the house was kept by the young widowed mother and the grand mother. Here again the home was the rigid Hindu home—a Brahmin home. It had certainly not much in earthly material possessions as the history already told indicates. But it was a home rich in *spiritual heritages* and the mother—a daughter of a highly learned Brahmin of the orthodox school—provided that guidance which any true educationist might desire. She was the *epitome of everything that the term 'mother' has conveyed to humanity*. She was rigidly abstemious in habits and inspired her son with a love for simple, frugal life that lasted throughout. He stood first in the University examinations, was a successful teacher, a successful lawyer, a judge of the High Court for about two decades but right through his long life his simple frugal habits he never forsook.

Her complete reliance on Divine power easily imbued the child with an awareness of a beneficent all-prevading pressure. This God-conscious child walked through life with a courage and a sense of loyalty to the first principles which nothing but an unswerving faith in a moral world could inspire. That stood by him in adversity. That kept him straight in his prosperity. The mother gave a guidance which left little to be desired. If one analyses the decisions given by her one is left amazed at the system that could 'educate' motherhood so wisely and could educate so true. Today literacy is confused with education. Academic additions of alphabets to names are mistaken for personality and culture. The Indian Hindu had adopted other methods. The 'educating' process followed in homes left an indelible impress on character and developed a personality fitted for and anxious to take on and discharge responsibilities rather than shout for rights. It is thus that a mother could leave to the country, community and the world the legacy of

a Sir Gooroodass, of a Sir Asutosh, of an Isvarchandra Vidyasagar, of a Mahatma Debendranath Tagore not to say of a Chaitanya, a Ramkrishna Paramhansa, a Raghunandan

When the question arose as to whether Gooroodass should live during his education with the mother or away from her with a relative the decision was in favour of the former. The decision was followed. When the question arose as to whether Gooroodass would go in for the indigenous Sanskrit or the English education and Science, the mother's decision was for the latter. The decision was followed. When the question arose as to whether Sir Gooroodass would be educated in an Indian School (Gour Addy's) under Indian environment or be staying elsewhere and be educated by Capt. Richardson—an English freethinker and a famous figure in the history of Bengal education—the decision again was of the mother for the first alternative. The decision was followed. Looking back to the evolution of Sir Gooroodass one is left to wonder how much at each dilemma a sound, just, and a wise decision of the mother contributed to the growth of that stature. One is left also to wonder how much the country, the community, and the society have lost when they altered the training of mother, and vulgarised the home. Modernisation is imperative but not at the cost of the fundamental moorings. The abode of peace and of idealism, of rectitude and of frugality, of simplicity and of humanity and above all thoroughly the God-conscious home—the nest of gold—is desecrated today by the tawdry, the flip-pant, the flamboyant, the silly, the imitating and the vacuous. It is no wonder that the helpless child when he grew up to be a man, when the fatherless urchin grew to be a judge of High Court, and the Indian Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University he would turn to consult mother's advice and take the dust off the feet of the mother at the end of the day's work. The latter half of the 19th century was an important epoch in the life of India. The restless first quarter of the 20th century was not less so. During this whole period the placid calm of the Indian outlook was being steadily and directly adjusted to modernism with all that the term connotes. Sir Gooroodass was constantly called upon to advise on each of the points at issue and his recorded opinions are worth quoting.

He strongly advocated religious education being imparted to the youths. Though he advocated that the home should be the main centre for imparting 'religious and moral' training he strongly advised that schools and colleges might also be organised to supplement it. He advised that first the students should be encouraged to develop a belief in the existence of God as the Creator and the moral Governor of the Universe, with infinite powers; secondly that the students should be encouraged to develop the conviction—by examples, and reasoned syllogism—that there are as inexorable laws of God in the world of spirit and life as the material laws—in the material world—God's laws in the world of matter which are designated 'scientific' laws, thirdly the teachers should explain and impress that life was a series of duties and all duties centred round God directly and indirectly; and fourthly that the laws of cause and effect are worked by God on the basis of his all-knowing knowledge. In fact if one analyses he would discover that the deep convictions on the points referred to were the fundamental bases of Brahmachari's training in the *Gurugriha* of the Vedic period. It is rather a matter of great significance that what the Hindu system laid the first and the best emphasis on *Brahmacharyya* and a clear training enjoined for self-control for integrated rectitude and God-consciousness before life as such could be started by a family man, the modern system of education has practically ignored the necessity for such a training and the substitute provided was a poor substitute of reading lessons on morality. The indiscipline all about is the inevitable result. In his first Convocation speech in 1890 he laid emphasis on the necessity for 'moral training.' He pointed out "It has often happened that brilliant intellectual gifts have been frittered away, and what is worse, applied to mischievous end, while comparatively moderate talents added by honesty of purpose and strength of character have achieved great and good results. The truth is *that sharp intelligence without sound moral nature can no more make a useful man, than fine implements can carve a beautiful image out of rotten wood*" He added, however, "A great deal, however, will depend on the *personal influence and example of the teacher*. Arnold has done for Rugby more than a library full of moral text-books could do; and the same must be the case everywhere" The last statement was an article

of faith with him and inspired his normal attitude of respect and reverence *not merely towards his own teachers but towards teachers as a class*. He knew the importance and the place of teachers in national life. He knew that “in that noblest of vocations but sorriest of trades” reverence must express the esteem and fix up the status of teachers. He knew that no country could aspire to be great which would not pay fervent reverence to its teachers. Was not Ekalabya the epic disciple of his country? Was not Basistha the ever-revered Guru? In the years followed after these words were uttered Bengal had been rich in those examples—Sir P. C. Ray, Sir J. C. Bose, Dr. P. K. Ray, Sir Benoyendranath Sen, Adhyapak Ramendrasundar Trivedi and Sir Brojendranath Seal were a few of those great magnets that had been polarising the fortunate youths of Bengal and proving the truth of his statement. Would Bengal produce their type again?

In the Convocation Address of 1891 at a time when to list English was considered the highest proof of education Sir Gooroodass emphasised the importance of the Bengalee literature.

Rabindranath's best expressions were then yet to come. Saratchandra Chatterjee was not heard of, while Dineschandra Sen had not even given an inkling of his history, growth of the, background and potentialities of the Bengalee literature and stressed that it should be the medium of instruction—an idea so successfully carried out by one other of Bengal's greatest sons Sir Asutosh Mookerjee. He said “the Bengalee language has now a rich literature that is well worthy of study in laying stress upon the importance of the study of our vernaculars; I am not led by any mere patriotic sentiment, excusable as such sentiment may be, but I am influenced by more substantial reasons. I firmly believe that *we cannot have any thorough and extensive culture as a nation unless knowledge is disseminated through our own vernaculars.*” He then cited historically the progress in Europe since Middle Ages by the introduction of vernaculars.

Though a strong and convinced believer in the orthodox Hindu view of life with its early marriages and against promiscuous mixing of sexes, his encouragement was unequivocal to the need to educate the girls to fit themselves up for the present-day life. In handing

over the degrees to the girl graduates at the Convocation of 1891 he said, "The encouragement of female education by its Degrees and other marks of distinction must rank as one of the highest useful functions of the University. *No community can be said to be an educated community unless its female members are educated, that is, not simply taught to read and write, but educated in the full and true sense of the word*. However a proud man may boast of his intellectual superiority over the gentler sex, the simple truth must be admitted that *woman is the primary educator of humanity*. Our Eastern mind, notwithstanding its supposed antipathy towards the fair sex, conceived the genius of learning to be a female divinity and it is, therefore, that our sage law-giver Manu, notwithstanding the harshness which characterises archaic codes, has inculcated that memorable precept :

Jatra nāryyastu pūjyante ramante tatia devatāh

Jatratāstu na pūjyante sarvāstatīāphalāh kriyāh.

Where women are honoured the Gods rejoice

Where they are not honoured there all the rites are fruitless.

The proposal to start a Women's College in the Dacca University had his fullest support. Bengal still lacks the ideal Women's Colleges to fit up women for the present-day life on the background of their own religion, their own culture, and their own ideologies. Though fortune favoured him as he grew up—a successful lawyer and a Judge of the High Court—his instinct and his vision for right thinking was never dimmed. When there was a proposal to start special colleges for well-to-do classes in the Dacca University, the keen Hindu flared up. His instinct and training had given him the clearest and most correct concept of the fundamental doctrine of Hindu ideology and Hindu sociology. He knew that the Hindu social system—of Varnasram and Caste, had not the slightest tinge of hatred or a claim of superiority for any. It was a composite arrangement of progress of the social organism as such with the fundamental background that 'God-realisation' is the one objective of life—as much for spiritual as and in consequence thereof of the material aspects of one's existence. He wrote in protest, "the establishment of a college for the well-to-do classes as a part of the University is open to grave objection. In the first place there is no necessity for such a college in connection with

the University, as it is not proposed that the students of that college should all read for University degrees and as the classes for which such a college is intended have ample means to establish a special college for themselves. In the second place the inclusion of such a college in the University will impair the integrity of University discipline *by the unequal treatment of the rich and the poor side by side and will give rise to unhealthy feelings in each class towards the other*. In the third place those for whom it is intended will benefit far less by studying in such a college than they would by becoming students of an ordinary college and joining in the competition with a better though poorer class of students.

To introduce distinction between the rich and the poor in the temple of learning would ill accord with one of the noblest and most cherished of human sentiments" The proposal was dropped.

Sir Gooroodass was deeply conscious of his responsibility. He was one those whose sense of duty was not ego-centric, confined to himself, to his family. He—deeply religious in the truest and finest sense that he was—knew what his seers had taught, that life must be lived as a perpetual repayment of debt (*Pitri-rin, Deva-rin*, etc.) to all about him. He knew his country. He knew its problems. He felt for every suffering in his country and shared the keen enthusiasm for removal of every obstacle that retards the progress of gnostic dynamic living, which was clearly the ideal he had set before him. To the misfortune of this unfortunate country a successful lawyer spends his life in law, makes his pile, and leaves the legacy not unoften to unworthy descendants; the successful Civil Servant, the High Court Judge, the successful business or professional man and the industrialist, does no better. The surging problems all about in the country seldom trouble them. They are not interested. Sir Gooroodass was of a different type. He could never cut himself adrift from the country and its varied problems and get lost in an ego-centric existence. Mother and the motherland to him were deities entitled to unfailing, constant, devoted attention and that attention at its best and at its highest. He shared to the full the interest in politics such as it existed at the time till he was raised to the Bench when he naturally kept himself aloof and avoided public participation. He was, however, a keen and anxious student of all events of the country and

took active interest in social and educational problems. His thoughts on education, his notes of criticism on University Commission Report, his thoughtful advice on "*Jnan O Karma*" and in later life his participation in schemes for national education and in all the active parts that he played as the first Indian Vice-Chancellor, as a member of the Syndicate show his keen interest in the problems of his country and his anxiety to play his part in their right solution. As a citizen he took his share of duties. In 1879 he functioned as an Hony. Magistrate. As one of the Sectional Presidents of the Calcutta University he took a paternal interest in all students irrespective of caste, creed and community. He was an active member of *Bangiya Sahitya Parishad*. He joined the Calcutta Municipality as one of its Commissioners. In 1887 he was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council as a representative of the Calcutta Corporation. Over and above that his help was always available to settle family disputes, social problems which meant considerable time and labour to himself. Finally he could be seen squatting on ordinary mats in a neighbour's house and helping the neighbour's sons in getting ready their lessons of school or college. His was never a patronising pose. He lived the life of the scriptures. His throbbing and feeling heart spread itself out to all and sundry about him as if in full realisation of "*eko devah sarvabhūteshu gūdhah*" In every detail of life he functioned true. He was truth and sincerity to the marrow of his bones. The incidents and anecdotes of his life are numerous and prove the spiritual development of Sir Gooroodass.

Pandit Ramgati was his teacher in youth. When Sir Gooroodass was a Judge the Pandit had some difficulty about the amount of his pension. According to him he should get from the Government a sum of Rs. 30 (Rupees thirty) more. To his old pupil he wrote to use his influence with the Government in the matter. Sir Gooroodass at once wrote back offering to pay Rs. 30 (Rupees thirty) per month from his own pocket as his expression of gratitude to his old Teacher. He started and kept paying it till the end of his day.

Sir Gooroodass before he joined Law was a teacher of mathematics. He wrote a book which was used as a text-book but as he was too busy to revise it in the profession where his work grew it fell out of use. When he became Vice-Chancellor, an enterprising Publisher wanted the book to be revised. Sir Gooroodass revised

it and sent it on to Prof Gaurisankar De to look through. On the latter doing it he permitted the Publisher to take up the work. When the first group of books was out of Press the Publisher handed over a copy to him. In looking through it he noticed that to his many titles as author was added the fact that he was the Vice-Chancellor. Sir Gooroodass's keen sense discovered that this was probably an exploitation of his position to influence school authorities to select it as a text-book. It was confirmed by the Publisher unwittingly affirming that it was the latter's object in inserting it. Sir Gooroodass objected and wanted to have it deleted. The Publisher submitted that as the printing was over and it had already cost him an amount which he stated it would be a great loss to him if this was not kept up. Sir Gooroodass's strong sense of fair play saw through the position. The Publisher departed. Before he could reach home a messenger from Sir Gooroodass was waiting with a letter. The letter said that his position as a Vice-Chancellor could not be used for the book and that the entire set of books printed should be destroyed. It enclosed a cheque for the amount stated already by the Publisher to compensate the latter, with apologies for the trouble.

At the special insistence of a man in need Sir Gooroodass had to endorse with recommendation an application for appointment made to Sir R. N. Mukherjee. The appointment was made. Years later Sir Gooroodass heard that the man was found guilty of misconduct and had been dismissed. Sir Gooroodass verified the facts. One morning Sir R. N. Mukherjee found a cover addressed to him. It enclosed a cheque for use in charity. It came from Sir Gooroodass as a penalty imposed by him on himself for having recommended a man who was unworthy.

A very close friend of the writer—who retired as a District Magistrate—told the writer that one evening he had called on Sir Gooroodass. As he was entering the room he heard some very earnest talks so he held himself back. In that talk Sir Gooroodass was pressing a man to accept a certain sum of money and the latter was vehemently declining till he was prevailed upon to accept it and he departed. He inquisitively enquired of Sir Gooroodass as to what it was all about. Sir Gooroodass stated that he had lost a trinket from his bed-room. The person was his personal servant

lately appointed and was the only servant who had access to the room and was expected to know where the trinket lay. No direct proof was available. Circumstantial evidence pointed to the probability that the servant had taken it. As this suspicion was fair to neither party he gave him a month's notice to secure a job and depart. The month had elapsed and the servant was leaving. Sir Gooroodass was insisting on his getting three more months' pay, as he explained that it was a mere suspicion which might not be true that had led to his discharge; secondly, a poor man without employment must be in a difficulty and he should have the additional pay that would help him to seek out a job and finally it was, according to Sir Gooroodass's judgment, his own fault that he kept the trinket not under lock and key but at a place where a poor man such as the servant was could be tempted. It was he himself, according to Sir Gooroodass, who deserve to be punished and three months' pay was the approximate fine that he thought that he must impose on himself.

A gentleman now a District Engineer told me of an incident of his own life. He was a student and lived in Calcutta. One day he was on a visit to a relative at Narikeldanga. Sir Gooroodass was on his round inviting neighbours to come and participate in his hospitality in the Puja annually held at his house. He said that all members of the family were to join. Sir Gooroodass left the place but was back within 15 minutes. He had remembered that this 'youth' was not specially asked. He might not be one of the 'members' of the family whom he had specified. He returned and addressing the strange youth said that he too was one of his 'invitees' and expressed regret that he had not specially asked him and addressing the relative said "not only all members of the family should come but all friends of the family too". The incident is one of the many proofs of his great humanity and his regard for rules of social responsibility.

It would be, however, wrong not to look to the background which had helped Sir Gooroodass to develop social sympathy and sensitiveness to social responsibility. Again it was the home and the mother. Long after Sir Gooroodass had seen prosperity and for years was a judge of the High Court all the younger ladies of the household came down one evening dressed in their best in saris and ornaments to tell the grandmother (Sir Gooroodass's

mother) where they were going to. To her query they said that it was to attend a social gathering on marriage. Sir Gooroodass's mother looked up and said "I cannot approve. In a social gathering the ladies of many families will come. Most of them as natural in the social conditions of a country which is not rich will not be in a position to come with the style of the saris and the ornaments you have put on. They may be hurt. Social meeting will mean stiffness of behaviour which will rob you of the joy which is the rare essence of such meetings. You must go back, change the dress and ornament to the simple standard suited to the means of average middle class families. You will be approachable to all. You should approach all. The meeting will have happy reminiscences and you will make many friends. Best saris and ornaments should only be put on in the family when only father, brother, husband's mother are present." The ladies had to go back, change the dress as advised and later approved by *Thākurmā* (the grandmother). It is thus the lyric of joint Hindu Home—kindly, thoughtful, correct and inspiring—taught members to be conscious of social responsibilities and build up an attitude against ego-centric selfishness. Sir Gooroodass had learnt all these with the mother's milk.

Sir Gooroodass never permitted, on principle, any of his relatives to appear as a lawyer in any of the cases before him in the High Court. I had an amusing incident narrated to me in this connection by Sir Manmathanath Mukherjee, for some time Chief Justice of the High Court of Bengal, and a son-in-law of Sir Gooroodass. He was then a youth. One evening he found a peon searching for him in his house. He handed over to him a rather very unexpected brief—his first brief in the Court—handsomely marked with fees. On the next day as he got into the Court he was accosted by late Dr. Rashbehary Ghose who enquired if he had been given a brief by a particular firm which he named. This puzzled him and made him nervous. As the case came up before two Judges one of whom was Sir Gooroodass, the latter, as was his practice, looked up the Vakalatnama and discovering Sir Manmatha's name insisted on his withdrawing from the case, inspite of protests to the contrary by his learned colleague on the bench, and Dr. Rashbehary Ghose, the advocate for the opposite party on the other. Sir Manmatha withdrew. What had happened was this that a

shrewd firm of solicitors needed an adjournment badly and had failed. When the case was fixed for hearing, taking advantage of Sir Gooroodass's well-known objection on principle, engaged his son-in-law, expecting that he would transfer the case elsewhere and an adjournment would be automatically secured. Sir Manmatha recollected that in the evening as he was resting at home on return from Court Sir Gooroodass's carriage stopped at his doors. He walked in, jocosely asked the son-in-law what loss he had put him to by the return of the fees. Being told Sir Gooroodass put the amount into his pocket and said that he would not rob him of the joy of his first fees. This was Sir Gooroodass, the man of principle and Sir Gooroodass, the affectionate relative. Even after retirement he would be found on Railway platforms either receiving or seeing off a grand-daughter leaving his home. At the same time at home he would insist upon a very simple and plain life being lived by all—a life verging on austerity yet rich in human fellowship. The standard that he would insist upon maintenance was of an average middle-class family. His dealings with teachers including even those who taught the little children of his house were marked by expression of regard and of feeling consideration. He knew and never hesitated to show by conduct the high place which according to him the teachers of the country should occupy in the life of the country. Throughout his life in every detail of his expression he would leave the impression of his utmost consideration for the feelings and susceptibilities of others. Nothing but straight sincere genuine behaviour marked his dealings. The unfortunate standard so much approvingly applauded today—practical, shrewd, realistic, etc—at once the hall-mark of definite moral and intellectual demoralisation even in the highest of earthly positions and in spheres of education and professed culture left him rigorously aloof. He was, above all, scrupulously true to himself. His affability and capacity to make himself at one with all and sundry led at times to amusing incidents. It is known that an old lady in quest of a priest found in the bathing ghat this frail individual—who was a convincing symbol of Brahmanism—requisitioned his services. Sir Gooroodass followed her, performed the Puja in the strict ritualistic form and was offered a two anna bit for the trouble.

Sir Gooroodass's mother was one morning approached by a neighbour not in affluence who in tears represented that the priest had not come, the time for Puja was passing, the Deity was without offerings of devotion. Her idea apparently was to get so good a neighbour to secure a priest through her people. The mother sent for her son. Sir Gooroodass was told by the mother of the neighbour's difficulties. Immediately Sir Gooroodass took off the slippers, changed his clothes and asked the lady to lead. She did and to her amazement was followed by Sir Gooroodass barefooted in the costume of a priest. The Puja was performed. The old lady was immensely gratified. She collected the flowers and the fruits and the rice offerings, put them in a brass plate and started accompanying him. Sir Gooroodass asked her not to trouble herself, spread his napkin, took the fruits and flowers and true priest as he was walked back home to the delight of his mother.

Valmiki in his great Epic *Ramayana* makes Rama discuss on types of a son. When told by Kaikeyi that Raja Dasarath had fainted because he had to give voice to a wish which was unpleasant to Rama, Rama said that he knew that there were three types of sons—the *Uttam* or of the first class was he among sons who would discover the parents' wishes by intuition and observation and act accordingly; the *Madhyam* or of the second class was he who would wait for expressed directions and guide himself accordingly, while the *Adham* or of the third class was the son who can counter to the expressed wishes of parents. He felt that he had always prided himself in being of the *Uttam* class and it was a surprise that King Dasarath should imagine that Rama would in any way feel hurt to carry out his wishes whatever they might be. Sir Gooroodass's spiritual make-up followed this prototype. To his mother he was always and at each stage of his life the devoted, the dutiful, the ever obedient and affectionate son. *Rama* and *Sita* idealism, with *Lakshman* as brother had been the main inspiration up to recent times in the Hindu homes. An ego-centric, materialistic vulgarity wrongly dubbed civilisation spread the cancer of selfishness to infect all the finer tissues of Hindu civilisation and of humanity. Vainly we look for Rama, Sita and Lakshman idealism behind any behaviour in modern society. Sir Gooroodass built up with the heritage of an

environment not uncommon in Bengal in those days evolved into a full stature of a man true in every fibre of his being. A bewildered world in vain attempts to explain the stocking of the psychological "unconscious but the Hindu Puran how to stock in the seed of the race" the Sanskaras or psychic Trends and had developed a finer technique. It was because of this that he attracted admirers from circles and spheres widely divergent. Lord Curzon on the eve of Sir Gooroodass's retirement in his letter, dated 30th January, 1904, wrote

"When I first arrived in Calcutta I was informed that there was on the Bench of the High Court an Indian Judge who to personal high character and the intellectual aptitudes of his race, added a profound acquaintance with the principles of western jurisprudence and in whose mind and speech might be observed a quite remarkable blend of the best that Asia can give or Europe teach. When I made his acquaintance I learnt that this description was correct and now that he is to retire from public life I cannot dissociate myself from the valedictory tributes that are being paid to one who has been such an ornament to his profession and his country."

Mr R. C. Dutt, I.C.S., C.I.E., in course of a long letter, dated 24th January, 1904, wrote.

"As a judge of the High Court you won the esteem of the nation; as Vice-Chancellor of the University you helped the education of younger generations; and I have still more pleasant recollections of the kindly and sympathetic help which you, descending from your high position, rendered to us in encouraging and helping the formation of a healthy Bengalee literature. The example of your life work will live among our countrymen as a valuable asset and as an inspiring memory."

Sir Harcourt Butler while leaving India on 31st April, 1915, wrote:

"I can assure you that in leaving India I leave no one behind for whom I have a higher regard and respect than yourself. To us of the western world the old Hindu idea is not a very attainable thing and yet when one thinks of this terrible war and all that modern civilisation is ending in, one cannot but fall back at times on the great ideals of Hinduism of which I regard you, as the public generally regard you, as one of the great exponents in your life and thought."

(I do not know if Sir Harcourt Butler is yet alive and one would be interested to know his opinion on progressive achievements of Western Civilisation till 1944)

Late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, speaking at a meeting of the Senate on 30th December, 1918 to discuss how his memory could be perpetuated, said, " The character of his work which impressed me most was his rectitude of purpose, his unflinching adherence to what appeared to be, in his judgment, the best in the interests of the University and no detractor, if indeed he had any detractor, will now venture to suggest that in what he did he was animated by any feelings or motive other than the best interests of the University Of him we may say without fear of challenge or question that in him India has lost one of the greatest of her sons, one who devoted all his best energies during a career of unexempted brilliance for the benefit of his fellowmen "

Sir Gooroodass left his mortal frame at 10-50 P.M. on 2nd December, 1918. Three days before his death on 28th November, 1918, he dictated a reply to a very kind letter which the Syndicate of the Calcutta University had written wishing an early recovery : " I am indeed deeply grateful to you and your esteemed colleagues for the touching message of hope May the abundant grace of my Maker and the over-flowing sympathy of my fellowmen which have so far sustained me during trial and tribulations continue to be vouchsafed to me in going through whatever has still to be faced."

At 1 P.M. on the last day he signed the pension cheque, asked his attendants to open the windows, looked on to the Ganges, and seemed to settle down to commune with his Maker. One of his sons was asked to read the *Geeta* He quietly fell asleep in the bosom of God at 10-50 P.M. on 2nd December, 1918, loved, respected, revered by all who knew him. It is said that before he died he had looked through and corrected the list of persons who would be requested to be present at his *śradh* after death, that he had even indicated the particular branch of the *bel* tree that would be used as the *yūpa kāsthā* on the occasion He accepted death as he had accepted life as one of those inevitable dispensations of his Maker man must bow down to Had not his *Geeta* told him :

“ Vāsāmsi jīrnāni yathā vihāya
 Navāni gīhnāti nara'parāni
 Tathā śarīrāni vihāya jīrnāny-
 Anyāni sañjāti navāni dehī.”

As man discards the clothes that are out-worn So the soul leaves the body it no longer needs and takes to a new one.

Seven years after his death on the occasion of the annual *śradh*, Lord Sinha wrote to Sir Gooroodass's son :

“ It was my privilege to meet him now and then during the many years his life was spared after his retirement in the course of many useful public functions all of which he made it a point to attend religiously. It was ever his motto to serve his fellowmen, He lived and died in the enjoyment of his countrymen's love and affection, their high regard and deep esteem Bengal is sanctified by the memory of such a son. Brilliant student, erudite scholar, devoted educationist, able advocate, upright judge, he was all that and more But I remember him best—and if I may reverently say so—love him best as the mild and pious Hindoo, who, while endowed with the best western culture rigidly adhered throughout his long life not merely to all the old Hindu ideals but to all Hindu practices of religion. I cannot think of that frail little body without also recalling the facts that his mother's least wish was to him “ law divine ” that rain or hail never prevented him from walking long distances every morning to wash himself in holy waters—that after a strenuous day in the heated atmosphere of court a glass of Ganges water was all the refreshment he would allow himself.”

Sir Gooroodass stands out as an outstanding example on a variety of subjects about which the present generation in India so definitely stands in need of a lead He was unwaveringly loyal to Hindu ideology—in theory as well as in practice, in philosophical doctrines as well as in the observance of the ritualistic details He carried the highest academic honours of a University modelled on a western system He practised law of a western people, before courts the procedure of which was fashioned out of the principles, procedure, concepts, traditions, precedents of a western people He administered justice as one of the judges of the Highest Courts on terms of complete equality with British colleagues earning highest

reputation for integrity, for judicial acumen, for capacity of interpretation of law and facts. In his private life, in his social life, in his spiritual life he was *an unrepentant unwavering Hindu*. Because he was a Hindu, he would not hurt a fly—was it not the Hindu sage who said, *Ahimsā paramo dharmaḥ*. He would be found in the company of any society which would care to request his presence. He would put himself to any trouble, to please others by his presence. But his ideas of rectitude, ideas of rigid Hindu orthodoxy, about food, drink and all forms of enjoyment he would adhere to with meticulous exactitude. His position as a Judge of the Highest Court, his position as Vice-Chancellor (and the first Indian Vice-Chancellor) would never stand in the way of his responding to the demand of the common humanity. *None kept so close to the national ways of life, national ideals*. None came as the fulfilment rather than the destruction of national aspirations by success. None proved more fully than he *that education, wealth, prosperity can have a national value only when they stand out as symbols of the highest and the best in the traditions and in the idealism of the race and definitely not in imitation of the traditions and the idealism of other races*. Was it not his *Geeta* which had taught him *Svadharme nidhanam śreyah Paradharmo bhāyarah* (better linger in your environmental association though poor than go in for a strange yet foreign conceptional context). In him common mother recognised the ideal son, the son the ideal father, the neighbour the ideal neighbour, the man in the street the ideal fellow-traveller, the discerning and the developed the highest and the best of spiritual man. He symbolised the entire gamut of national life. He epitomised Hindu India, therefore national integrated India, therefore, international India, therefore, human India. God-conscious to the marrow of his bones,—justice, fairplay, spirit of service, human brotherhood and fellowship at its best and at its highest and strictest loyalty to the fundamental principles of life found expression in him. He is of the same genus, of the same species—of the same type of ascetic idealism that India threw up in recent times in more pronounced form, though in another and more tumultuous sphere, in Mohan Chand Karam Chand Gandhi the most radiant expression of Indian spiritual *and* social force which might be categorised as the *Geeta* genus. Let us remember

today—a hundred years after Sir Gooroodass's birth—this lamp of gold. Let us—Indian like—warm our hearts with its warmth. Let us in all humility express our gratitude to the Maker for having sent him to us. Let us say that by his coming

“*Kulam pavitram, Jananī Kṛtārthā*”—blessed by his birth is the mother and the motherland. Let us pray that his light might light our steps, the steps of our children, of our children's children?

The writer ventures to close this small tribute to one whom, though unconnected with him by ties of blood, he had adored from his boyhood by a personal reminiscence. One of his proudest privileges of life has been that he was born in a family that for over seven hundred years has been living in a village on the bank of the Ganges that has also been the home of the preceptors of Sir Gooroodass and of his ancestors. The story goes that it was at the preceptor's place that for a till then barren mother prayers and rituals were offered for the birth of a son (‘*Putresthī Yajña*’ as the Hindu mystic ritualist puts it) and Sir Gooroodass was born. Years after Sir Gooroodass was a Knighted Judge of the High Court this preceptor had to request his presence at a ‘*Vaisnab Sammelan*’. He readily agreed. On the appointed day Sir Gooroodass was found to get into a third class Railway compartment barefooted. Alighting at the Railway station he walked to and from the place of the meeting in the village barefooted. To him, he said, it was a pilgrimage—to the village of his “Guru” and of the “Gurus” (preceptors spiritually) of his family. Every time the writer touches the soil of his village he feels sanctified for this among other reasons.

GOOROODASS BANERJEE AND THE NATIONAL EDUCATION MOVEMENT

BENOY SARKAR

NATIONAL EDUCATION AS AN ITEM IN THE BENGALI REVOLUTION OF 1905

National education, the topic of the present paper, is a technical term. It does not imply, as it generally should, the educational

system prevailing in a country. It does not cover the net-work of schools through which the entire population passes from, say, 6 to 14 in favourably placed communities. Nor does it embrace the hierarchy of institutions of diverse categories from the lowest to the highest that a people provides for the different age-periods of its scholars. It describes the special ideas, ideals and experiments associated with the activities of the National Council of Education, Bengal, which was established by the Bengali people in 1906 as a result of the political and industrial movements of 1905. Of this national education movement strictly so called Gooroodass Banerjee (1844-1918) was one of the most creative and valuable architects. In regard to some of its contents he was indeed a real ideological pioneer. He had championed them at least a decade and a half before the movement came into being, if not earlier as the author of *Abused India Vindicated* (1870)¹

The ideas of 1905 constituted an organic complex of four categories. The first category was the boycott of British goods. The second was the inauguration of an all-round *swadeshi* (indigenous goods) movement calculated to promote the industrialization of India. The establishment of *swaraj* (self-rule, independence, democracy) in the political domain was the third category. Last but not least was the cultural programme embodied in the fourth category, national education. All these categories were raising their heads in the session of the Indian National Congress at Benares (1905) and were prominent in that at Calcutta (1906). Down to the outbreak of World War I in 1914 these were the terms for Young India to conjure with, especially in Bengal.

The fourfold slogan of boycott, *swadeshi*, *swaraj* and national education was the fundamental *idée-force* of the Bengali people for the decade that started on August 7, 1905. Large sections of the *intelligentsia* comprising journalists and authors were inspired by these ideas and ideals. Many leading persons of the landowning and mercantile communities were active participants in these ideologies and movements. A prominent part was taken by members of the legal and medical professions. Very creatively associated

¹ *Reminiscences, Speeches and Writings of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee* edited by Upendrachandra Banerjee (Calcutta, 1927). See Part II, pages 1-54 for G. Banerjee's paper on *Abused India Vindicated*, dated 1870 or 1871.

with them were likewise clerks, shopkeepers and artisans. The sway over industrial workers was no less noticeable in certain areas. And in all these groups or communities the *personnel* was both Hindu and Muslim.

For the first time after the events of 1857 the Bengali people created and was responsible for a movement which covered the masses as well as the classes. At any rate it became the life-blood of virtually the entire middle class comprising the landed and commercial bourgeoisie. In the perspective of the mental and moral currents as well as socio-political forces in operation since the functioning of the Indian National Congress in 1885 the categories, boycott, *swadeshi*, *swaraj* and national education, severally as well as collectively registered a tremendous spiritual remaking of the Bengali people. The societal transformation mirrored forth in the ideas of 1905 was tantamount to the emergence of altogether renovated personalities and entirely new institutions. Thus was called into being the glorious Bengali revolution as a world-force commissioned to co-operate with the evolving new orders in Asia and Eur-America. Young Bengal was born as a power among the powers of the world.

FEEDERS OF THE BENGALI REVOLUTION

The glorious Bengali revolution was not an exclusively political or politico-industrial phenomenon. It was not the work merely of the ideologies of Surendra Banerjee, Romesh Dutt and others associated with the Indian National Congress. It was an all-round socio-moral upheaval. The encyclopædic modernism and rationalism of Rammohun was one of its mightiest feeders. The literary creativities of Madhusudan, Rangalal, Vidyasagar, Bankim, Hem Banerjee, Nabin Sen, Girish Ghosh and Tagore had been nurturing the emotions and the soul of the people. Then there was the energetic nationalism and dynamic culture-philosophy of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement at work. Finally, the spirit operating in Jogen Ghosh's Association for the Industrial and Scientific Training of Indians in Foreign Countries contributed in no small measure to the emergence of creative discontent among all and sundry.

Virtually each one of these forces and tendencies was directly or indirectly inspired by the leading world-movements in Eur-American civilization. These were mainly five in number, namely, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and the Romantic Movement. The backbone of the Bengali revolution of 1905 was built up to a considerable extent out of the spiritual flesh and blood furnished by these Western currents of life and thought. There are, further, to be mentioned the impacts of the unifying and freedom activities of Germany and Italy. The bearings of the more recent victories of Japan over Russia at Port Arthur and on the Tsushima Sea (1904) on the creativities of the Bengali people were too direct and immediate to be overlooked. In Gooroodass Banerjee's mental and moral make-up, passed as he had the sixtieth year at this time, the contributions of personalities from Comenius to Rousseau and Rammohun, as well as from Madhusudan, Comte, Mill and Mazzini to Bhudev, Bismarck and Togo have each had its part,—although of course in varying doses ²

THE EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION IN THE NATIONAL COUNCIL PATTERN

The features of the educational revolution as consummated by the National Council of Education may be indicated in the main as follows .

1. The mother-tongue was made the medium of instruction from the elementary up to the highest University stages.
2. English was treated as the compulsory "second" language
- 3 All the natural sciences,—physico-chemical as well as biological—were made compulsory in the pre-University (Matric.) stage
4. Manual training and elementary technical instruction were likewise made compulsory in the pre-University (Matric) stage .

² For the influences of the East and West on Banerjee's personality see his paper entitled "Moral Aspects of the Legal Profession," (*National Magazine*, Calcutta, March, 1891) and "A Few Thoughts on the Study of Literature" (September, 1895) in *Reminiscences*, Part II, pp. 126-174.

5. Mechanical, electrical and chemical engineering courses were opened in the post-Matric. stage, parallel to the usual arts and science courses.
6. Researches and publications in Indian history, philosophy, arts and culture generally were promoted as an integral part of the appointments connected with teaching
7. French and German were introduced as compulsory for every course in the University (Proficiency) stage

The above educational pattern as envisaged in the ideas of 1905 sought to bring India in line with the modern tendencies in education and culture.³ The revolution projected by the National Council of Education was profound. Indeed even today, *i.e.*, almost four decades since then, in spite of recent reforms many of these seven items have remained virtually *ultima thule* in the University systems of India. Item No. 6 may be said to have been taken up in seriousness and with success. Nos 1 (the mother-tongue medium) and 3 (compulsory scientific bias) are being attempted and find themselves in their first stages

THE DAWN SOCIETY AS PRECURSOR OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATION

Into this Bengali revolution Gooroodass Banerjee in his own way threw himself heart and soul and contributed his quota from the platform of his own attainments and experiences. For the educational plank of the Bengali revolution he had been thoroughly well equipped. And it was convenient and possible for him to take part in and activate the educational revolution because he was not a Government man at this time, having retired from the Bench in 1904.

The national education movement such as took shape in the National Council of Education (1906) was essentially the handiwork in the main of the Dawn Society and its organizer, Satis Chandra Mookerjee. With Satis Mookerjee Gooroodass Banerjee had been intimately associated as senior friend, colleague and well-

³ B. K. Saikar, *Introduction to the Science of Education* (London, 1912), "New Orientation of the Educational Creed" (*Prabuddha Bharata*, Almora, June, 1940)

wisher. He was, besides, the President of Mookerjee's Dawn Society established in 1902

The Dawn Society was a non-political Institute of nationalism in its most all-embracing sense. Several hundred students of colleges in Calcutta, hailing as they did from the remotest districts of Bengal and Bihar, were attracted to this Institute by Satis Mookerjee's personality. From year's end to year's end they attended the two weekly classes held under its auspices. Their foremost acquisition in these "extra-mural" lessons was the *Gita* doctrine of *niskama karma* (duty irrespective of consequence). They got a schooling likewise in the principles of industrial progress, linguistic nationalism, social service, rural reconstruction and cultural patriotism. Statistical studies bearing on the Census Reports for modern India were frequent features. No less constant were historical investigations relating to the Indian unities and the establishment of Greater India in ancient and medieval times.

It was in this atmosphere of the Dawn Society that Brajen Seal, the encyclopaedist in arts and sciences, Rabindranath Tagore, the free lance in culture and politics, Sister Nivedita of the Ramkrishna-Vivekananda Order, the philosopher of romantic nationalism and aggressive Indianism, Suren Banerjee, Bipin Pal and Abdul Rasul, leaders of political agitation, Ramendrasundar Trivedi of the *Bangiya Sahitya Parishat* (Bengali Academy of Literature), Motilal Ghosh of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Dinesh Sen, researcher in Bengali language and literature, Ambika Ukil, the exponent of bank and insurance capitalism, industrial expansion and co-operative stores movement, Pandits Nilakantha Goswami and Durgacharan Sankhya-Vedantatirtha, Brahmabandhab Upadhyay, the apostle of Hindu renaissance, Hirendranath Datta, the writer of philosophical essays, and others were brought together with Gooroodass Banerjee in person or in spirit. A cultural and educational revolution was held in solution in the lectures, discussions and social gatherings of the Dawn Society on the eve of August 7, 1905. For the role of an architect of the National Council of Education that was subsequently to emerge Banerjee, therefore, possessed adequate instruments and agencies on account of *liaisons* with the varied forces influencing the people. Like other architects of the National Council Banerjee could look upon the Dawn Society as its precursor

or half-way house.¹ Be it observed *en passant* that he was senior to the rest by at least two decades and did not fail to be touched by the enthusiasm of "younger lions."

VIVEKANANDISM INSTITUTIONALIZED IN THE NATIONAL COUNCIL COMPLEX

The revolution concretized in the national education complex of 1905 was of the same order as the philosophical revolution called into being by Vivekananda in India on his return from *digvijaya* (conquest of the quarters) in Chicago (1893) and the West. Lecturing at Kumbakonam in South India (February, 1897) he gave out his life's *credo* as follows.²

"What our country now wants are muscles of iron and muscles of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face." This was an epoch-making ethics for Young India. This educational philosophy of Vivekananda became a constant ingredient in the mental and moral outfit of Indian leaders.

In the same key Vivekananda spoke at Madras while *en route* to Calcutta. Describing his plan of campaign he played his spiritual dynamo on the audience in the following manner. "You have been told and taught," said he,³ "that you can do nothing, and nonentities you are becoming every day. What we want is strength, so believe in yourselves. We have become weak and that is why occultism and mysticism come to us, these creepy things. Make your nerves strong. Stand on your feet and be men. It is man-making theories that we want. It is man-making education all round that we want."

This ideal of man-making education was a revolutionary ideal for India in the last decade of the nineteenth century. No less

¹ See the *Dawn and the Dawn Society's Magazine* for 1903-08 for reports about the educational and cultural activities of the Dawn Society as well as the origins and early history of the National Council of Education. See also B. K. Sarkar, *Education for Industrialization* (Calcutta, 1946), pp. 69-119.

² *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Part III (Almora, 1932), pp. 189-190.

³ *The Complete Works*, Part III, p. 224.

was Young Bengal electrified as Vivekananda thundered on the audience at Calcutta⁷ in reply to the address of welcome (1897). "If, as you say, I have done something, remember," exhorted he, "that I was that good-for-nothing boy playing in the streets of Calcutta. If I have done so much how much more will you do? Arise and awake, the world is calling upon you."

The goal set before Young India was equally exhilarating, concrete and definite. "We have to conquer the world. That we have to"—declared Vivekananda at that Calcutta meeting, "India must conquer the world, and nothing less than that is my ideal. The sign of life is expansion, we must go out, expand, show life or degrade, fester and die. There is no other alternative. Take either of these, either live or die"

These are the soul-enfranchizing messages of dare-devil energism with which Young Bengal was steeled during the decade that closed with the educational revolution of 1905. It is significant to recall that Satis Mookerjee, editor of the *Dawn* and the organizer of the Dawn Society, was a personal friend of Vivekananda and in spiritual alliance with Vivekanandism as propagated at home and abroad. Besides, Nivedita, the Irish disciple of Vivekananda, was a *guru* of the Dawn Society's youngsters. Sparks of the gospel of Vivekananda could be felt by Gooroodass Banerjee in the interhuman contacts of this Institute. Vivekanandism may be said to have been somewhat institutionalized in the National Council of Education in and through Satis Mookerjee's disciples and lieutenants

NATIONAL EDUCATION A PROTEST AGAINST STATE-DIRECTED EDUCATION

Contact with the people's institutions and movements, *for* *populi* and leaders of public life and thought, was not the sole source of *l'elan de la vie* in Gooroodass Banerjee's creativities as a builder of the national education movement. He had been a Government man for sixteen years from 1888 to 1904. The state-directed educational system had been known to him in diverse

⁷ *The Complete Works*, Part III, pp 316-318. See the chapter on "Vivekananda as World-Conqueror" in B. K. Sarkar, *Creative India* (Lahore, 1937), pp 669-696.

capacities since 1865, his twenty-first year. In 1890 he commenced his Vice-Chancellorship at the Calcutta University, being the first Indian permitted to acquaint himself with the administrative mysteries of a modern institution of higher learning. On the Indian Universities Commission of 1902 he received appointment as a member. All these official experiences were no less valuable than the Dawn Society contacts in the making of Gooroodass Banerjee's urges towards the launching of the educational revolution by 1905. And in this officialized University *milieu* his colleagues were such seniors as Rajendralala Mitra, the archaeologist and antiquarian, and Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, the feminist-social reformer and modernizer of Sanskrit learning, as well as juniors like Asutosh Mookerjee who as *enfant terrible* was then but "mewing his might" in the field of educational reconstruction.

The national education ideologies of 1905 grew in the womb of the state-directed educational system. It is as a critic of and a protestant against the University of Calcutta that Gooroodass Banerjee functioned in the ripeness of time while co-operating with the other founders of the National Council of Education.

A critique of the existing system and a protest against it were powerfully set forth in the paper read by Rabindranath Tagore at the inauguration ceremony of the National Council of Education on August 15, 1906. He addressed himself as follows.⁸

"In the supreme confidence that we shall not be the phonographs of English lectures and the birds chained to the cages of British professors I offer my obeisance to our newly established national temple of learning."

Tagore's jubilation found expression in the following almost lyrical lines of his wonderful prose.

"A living welfare has been born in the confinement-room of our Mother Bengal. May the conch of joy sound forth in the courtyards of the entire country. May presents and gifts be ready! May we fall no victims to miserliness!"

In Tagore's eyes the *jatrya vidyalaya* (national school) was the symbol of a spiritual renaissance, the establishment of the non-

⁸ Tagore *Silsha* (1935, third edition), p. 61. For Tagore's contacts with the Dawn Society and with the beginnings of the National Council of Education see *Rabindra Rachanavali* (Vishwa-bharati edition, Calcutta), Vol. XII, pp. 623-629.

political Bengali republic as projected in his *Swadeshi Samaj* (July-August, 1904).

THE MOTHER-TONGUE IN EDUCATION

A revolution is justified by the grave and longstanding short-comings of the *status quo*. One of the most serious short-comings of the educational system as obtaining in India was hit upon by Gooroodass Banerjee in 1891. In his Convocation Address⁹ at the University he observed as follows: "I also deem it not merely desirable, but necessary that we should encourage the study of those Indian vernaculars that have a literature by making them compulsory subjects of our examinations in conjunction with their kindred classical languages." This was a rather modest proposal. The more substantial and fundamental question of rendering the mother-tongue the *medium* of instruction was not broached.

It should be pointed out, however, that he was not unaware of the importance of that question, for he did not fail to draw attention to the fact that "the dark depths of ignorance all round will never be illumined until the light of knowledge reaches the masses through the medium of their own vernaculars."

Be this as it may, Gooroodass Banerjee's suggestion, elementary and simple as it was, proved to be a revolutionary departure from the beaten track and quite unacceptable to the powers that be. As it turned out, a test case was made out of it by a junior colleague of Banerjee. Within a few weeks of the Convocation a regular resolution was enthusiastically placed with the Registrar of the University by Senator Asutosh Mookerjee, then a raw youngster of 26 with a view to give concrete shape to Banerjee's suggestion. The resolution was supported, among others, by Bankim Chatterjee of *Bande Mataram* fame, Anandamohan Bose (President, Indian National Congress), and Haraprasad Sastri, the Sanskritist and historian. But the motion was lost (July 11, 1891), and the failure remained as a lesson with Asutosh, the patriot and young enthusiast. Nobody can fail, at any rate, to notice Banerjee's role as a pioneer in the movement for the mother-tongues.

⁹ *Reminiscences*, Part III, pp. 91-92, 118.

At the Convocation of December 26, 1913, while conferring honorary doctorate on Tagore it was possible for Mookerjee¹⁰ to recall with pride this failure of his as "the young Senator of twenty three years ago" It is worth while to be reminded by him likewise that the "Senators complimented the novice on his eloquence and admired his boldness, but doubted his wisdom and by an overwhelming majority rejected his proposal on what now seems the truly astonishing ground that the Indian vernaculars did not deserve serious study by Indian students who had entered an Indian University."

With redoubled force did Banerjee revert to the subject of the mother-tongue in his Convocation Address of 1892 "One great reason why our University education fails to awaken much original thinking," said he on this occasion, "is because it is imparted through the medium of a difficult foreign language, the genius of which is so widely different from that of our own"

In Banerjee's interest in the mother-tongue for school curriculum there was manifest a sign of the times A paper entitled *Shiksha Her-Pher* (Discrepancies in Education) was published by Tagore in the monthly *Sadhana* (*Paush*, 1299=January 1893). One of his charges against the existing educational system referred to its being conducted in English, "an exceedingly alien language." "Neither in vocabulary nor in syntax does it have any affinity with our language," said he; "further, both the ideas as well as the topics are foreign" No less condemnable according to Tagore was the fact that the "educational system was not in keeping or agreement with our modes of life We do not get any high ideals of our society from the books recommended for our study. There is no natural possibility of intimate contact with our daily life through our schools"

We should like to observe, here, that in 1898 the cause of the mother-tongue was taken up by the *Bangiya Sahitya Parishat* (Bengali Academy of Literature). This Parishat started correspondence with the University in regard to the elevation of Bengali language to a dignified status in the curriculum on the lines more or less of Banerjee's suggestion.

¹⁰ *University of Calcutta Convocation Addresses*, Vol IV, 1907-14 (Calcutta, 1914), p 1340

RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

A serious shortcoming of the Indian educational system was the want of original researches and publications by scholars turned out of the colleges. Nobody was more conscious of this lamentable defect than Gooroodass Banerjee. To this he made it a point to refer in the first Convocation Address of his life, that delivered in 1890. "I wish I could refer," said he in part,¹¹ "to a long catalogue of literary and scientific achievements made by our graduates. The truth is that our graduates come for the most part from the poorer classes; they have to earn their livelihood; they find very little encouragement for labours in the fields of literature and science in the shape of fellowships and in other shapes in which such labours are elsewhere encouraged, while they find better prospects in other lines."

Banerjee was not content with merely hitting on the weakness. He suggested also a remedy, and this consisted in the institution of fellowships for the promotion of researches. He felt that "if the fellowships be made tenable only upon condition of approved work being done the graduates might be "put in the way of contributing their share, however humble, to the advancement of learning." On the same string he harped also in the Convocation Address of 1891.

Interest in socio-cultural and historical research was natural with him as the author of the Tagore Law Lectures entitled the *Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhana* delivered in 1878. His interest in modern scientific investigations was no less keen and personal. He was an active and intimate colleague of Mahendralal Sarkar, founder of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (1876), an institution which during the last two decades has made a world-wide name.

No defect of the Governmental system of education in India of those days as of today is more pernicious than its over-literary character and the absence of adequate or decent vocational, technical and other materialistic facilities. Gooroodass Banerjee was alive to this shortcoming. His Convocation Address of 1891 contains

¹¹ *Reminiscences, etc.*, Part II, pp 71-73, 100

lines like the following.¹² "I fully see the importance and necessity of technical education," said he, "In these days of keen competition and hard struggle for existence, unless we can utilize and improve the products of Nature; and unless our artisans are trained in the application of science to art we can never hope for the material prosperity of the country." Interest in technology was at least as old with Banerjee as 1891

The need for technical education, as emphasized by Banerjee, was felt by many Indians. We find it voiced, for instance, by Vivekananda about 1900. "What we need," he used to say,¹³ "is to study, independent of foreign control, different branches of the knowledge that is our own, and with it the English language and Western science. We need technical education and all else which may develop industries." In these passages, indeed, we have in a nutshell the entire pedagogic pattern of the National Council of Education. For the time being it is worth while to call attention to Banerjee's pioneering the cause of technical education in the early 90's of the last century.

THE STUDENT REVOLT

For the direct and immediate origins of the national education movement we have to look far away from the educational field itself. The circumstances were purely political. Gooroodass Banerjee had a substantial part to play in the piloting of the situation.

As a protest against the partition of Bengal the boycott of British goods was declared by the Bengali people in Pabna and other districts (July, 1905). At Calcutta on August 7, this lead of the *Mofussil* in the proclamation of boycott was confirmed and publicized in the Town Hall meeting under the chairmanship of Naren Sen of the *Indian Mirror*.

It was the students and youngmen who proved to be the most energetic and enthusiastic torch-bearers of the boycott, and this throughout the length and breadth of Bengal. Government wanted to crush the participation of students in this movement and issued

¹² *Reminiscences, etc*, Part II, p. 97. See B. K. Sarkar. *Creative India* (Lahore, 1937), the sections on education in engineering and science, pp. 611-643.

¹³ *The Complete Works*, Part V, p. 284.

a Circular (October 10) penalizing student activities in this field and the singing of *Bande Mataram* (Hail Motherland)

The challenge was accepted by Young Bengal. *Bande Mataram* became sanctified as the national anthem comparable to a psalm of the Old Testament or a hymn of the *Rig Veda*. The boycott became the emblem of national independence. Students of the district of Rangpur took the lead. They courted incarceration and expulsion. Martyrdom was catching. In district headquarters as well as subdivisional centres expulsion of students became the order of the day. The Anti-circular Society (October 22) was established at Calcutta under the directions of Krishnakumar Mitra, editor of the *Sanjibani*, with Sachin Bose (subsequently insurance agent and editor, *Byabasa O Banjya*) as lieutenant. The object was to fight the Government Circular as well as encourage students in the carrying on of the boycott of British goods.

Gradually or rather automatically the animus of the people was directed to the boycott of the state-directed University. By November it began to be nicknamed as the *gola-khana* (factory for the manufacture of slaves). The University-boycott movement found its brain-trust in the Dawn Society. The leaders were Satis Mookerjee's lieutenants. One was Radhakumud Mookerjee, who has subsequently become well-known as the author of *A History of Indian Shipping* and *Hindu Culture* as well as a publicist of the Governmental Legislative Council Complex. Another leader of the movement was Rabindranarayan Ghosh, who later became the translator into Bengali of Guizot's *History of European Civilization* (in English rendering) and died in December 1943 as Principal of Ripon College, Calcutta.

In November, 1905 the student revolt was a *fait accompli* on a comprehensive and all-Bengal scale. It was constantly on the go. Finances for the maintenance of an independent national university began to be promised by "Raja" Subodh Mallik of Calcutta, Brajendrakishore Roychowdhury (of Gauripur, Mymensingh) and Maharaja Suryakanta Acharya (of Mymensingh).

The student revolt got a public recognition on November 14 when Asutosh Chaudhuri (Barrister) issued an open letter to the leaders in the following terms: "A very large number of students has apparently determined not to go up for the University exa-

minations this year Their idea is to sever all connections with the Calcutta University and join some educational institution under national control There is no such institution now and the question of establishing one, if we are to provide for these students and others who are likely to follow their lead, must be at once taken up and finally determined "

At the request of Hnendranath Datta, " one of our most sedate public men " Chaudhuri had attended " a meeting consisting of over five thousand students " This enabled him to feel the " urgency of the matter." The matter was discussed at the conference of leaders on November 16, under the Chairmanship of Raja Peary Mohan Mookerjee Gooroodass Banerjee's contribution to the proceedings of this conference was substantial and decisive The establishment of the National Council of Education was decided upon by the resolutions of Surendranath Banerjee, Taraknath Palit (Barrister) and Motilal Ghose The resolution of Gooroodass Banerjee and Rashbehary Ghose (Advocate) appreciated the " devotion and self-sacrifice " of the students but recommended that the University examinations should not be boycotted The student revolt found constructive and positive channels ¹⁴

The boycott of the University was thereby avoided But Gooroodass Banerjee whole-heartedly endorsed the revolution as proclaimed by the conference in and through the launching of the National Council of Education, " on national lines and under national control " Banerjee's association with the ideas of 1905, be it observed here, was intimate and all-round For instance, on October 16 the foundation stone of the Federation Hall was laid at Calcutta as a protest against the partition of Bengal On that occasion Banerjee had taken part in the proceedings and was enthusiastic enough to vote Anandamohan Bose, the dying publicist, to the chair.

" EXCLUSIVELY UNDER NATIONAL CONTROL "

From November 16, 1905, to the end of his life in December, 1918, Gooroodass Banerjee was among the bravest and stoutest

¹⁴ *The Dawn and the Dawn Society's Magazine*, for 1905 08 For Tagore's contacts with the student revolt, see *Rabindra Rachanaval*, Vol XII, pp 623 629

pillars of the educational revolution. The penalising tendencies of the Government were directly and indirectly at work on the students, guardians and teaching staffs of the Bengal National College at Calcutta as well as on the dozens of National Schools in Bengal. But Banerjee's loyalty to the revolution never came to be adulterated with doses of betrayal or renegadism. His co-operation with the educational nationalists was unsophisticated adamant and hundred percent. It was his enthusiastic support that encouraged Maharaja Manindrachandra Nandi of Cossimbazar to join the N. C. E. as a donor.

Satis Mookerjee was the chief among the prominent educationists with whom Banerjee held almost daily intercourse during the formative period of the National Council's pedagogic programme. Constructive suggestions from Brajen Seal, Hiren Datta and Ramendra Trivedi were always at Banerjee's service.

A valuable contribution of Banerjee during this stage consisted in the incorporation of the words, "not in opposition to but standing apart from the existing systems of primary, secondary and collegiate education," in the N. C. E.'s *Memorandum of Association*. It is on the strength of the phrase "not in opposition to" that Banerjee sought to counteract the unnecessarily hostile attitude of the Government and the state-directed University. But he was patriotic radical or revolutionary enough to support the N. C. E. as an institution "exclusively under national control" ¹⁵

On August 15, 1906, the inaugural meeting of the National Council of Education was held at the Town Hall, Calcutta, with Rashbehary Ghose, the first President of the N. C. E., as Chairman. Banerjee read his paper entitled *The National Council of Education, Bengal*. It was designed to declare the N. C. E.'s "objects and plan of work." Banerjee's position was definite and emphatic. There was no double-dealing or expediency in his observations. It was possible for him to declare categorically as follows: "The existing system of English education in this country has failed to produce satisfactory results." ¹⁶

¹⁵ *Reminiscences*, Part II, pp. 208, 212. See the *Calendar and Report of the National Council of Education, Bengal*, 1906-09 for the theory and development of this institution.

¹⁶ *Reminiscences*, Part II, p. 210.

Banerjee was then 62 years old. In this instance, at any rate, age instead of counselling moderation and restraint confirmed him in his honest faith in the need for a revolutionary experiment. He had been a Government man for over eighteen years and was connected with the University for nearly the same period. For such a person to proclaim the failure of state-directed education without camouflage was itself a revolution of no mean order in Indian social psychology.

IDEALISM AND REALISM

The educational revolution consummated by the N.C.E. was enthusiastically greeted by Tagore¹⁷ in the Bengali paper read by him at the inaugural meeting of the Town Hall, Calcutta (August 15, 1906)

“How easily and in what a short period of time has appeared as truth,” said he eloquently, “what was never to happen in long years with efforts, pains and arguments, what the wiseacres after examining all previous records would have vigorously shaken their white heads in order to stigmatize as premature, impossible and unreasonable !”

The consummation overpowered Tagore immensely as an unmistakable manifestation of *shakti* (might) in the Bengali people's character. The paper entitled *National School* was a romantic outburst, so to say, or a string of jubilant odes in prose, as it were, on the consciousness of strength, on national self-realization, on the people's Heaven-destined mission.

It was possible for him to go in raptures over the achievement. His voice rose to the highest as he announced: “The national school that has been established in our country today, is, I say, not a life-less inert matter. It is with life that we have created life.” He did not end there. His futurism found expression in the following prophecy: “It is not going to end where it has been made to stand. It will grow, it will move. There is an immense future in it. Who can weigh it?”

In August, 1906 Tagore was holding forth as the author of *Swadeshi Samaj* (Indigenous Society), the paper read twice and

¹⁷ *Shilsha*, pp. 71, 73. See also footnote 8.

published in July, 1904. There, in the manner of Masaryk's *Ceska Otazka* (Czech Question, 1894) he had propounded the doctrine of the *Samaj* (society, folk, nation) as being separate from and independent of the state. In his political planning the Bengali people (*samaj*) should carry on non-political and non-military activities without reference to the statal machinery. The people or the nation should remain indifferent to the Government.

To the Town Hall meeting of 1906 he came evidently convinced that his previous message was being done into life. In the field of education his Bengali *samaj* was appearing to achieve de-control, autonomy or independence of the administrative system. His expectation seemed to be fulfilled in another direction. Gooroodass Banerjee, whom in *Swadeshi Samaj* he had recommended as the President of his non-political Bengali republic, was found to be the life and soul of this independent national university. His idealism, therefore, knew no bounds.

By the poet's prose the audience was carried along on the wings of fine frenzy. The Town Hall was maddened into one solid human structure of life-devouring enthusiasm. It was revolution personified, tingling, vitalized that Tagore and his Young Bengal constituted on that August evening of 1906. The oratorical hypnotism was superb.

And yet in the perspective of Tagorean idealism, lyrical flow and patriotic fervour Gooroodass Banerjee's realistic "statement of objects and plan of work," logical, reasoned-out, unsentimental and prosaic as it was, proved to be no less a chip of revolutionary Bengal. From top to bottom Banerjee's observations were direct hits hurled at the educational ideals, methods and practices of the preceding half-century. In his speech he did nothing but explain *ad seriatim*, like a seasoned lawyer, the important items of the *Memorandum of Association*. But every line, nay, every word went home to the audience as the bitter attack of the sexagenarian upon the Government and the University. His statements were moderate and modest. But to the people their "meaning" was extremist, radical, revolutionary. This is but another illustration of the consequential or "pragmatic" value of words or ideas.

A CUMULATIVE EVOLUTION

For India and the world the national education movement was a revolution of the Bengali people. But to Gooroodass Banerjee it was but a cumulative and slow evolution of the people's reactions to a long-standing evil. From his angle of vision neither was the discontent new nor the remedy. Many of the statements in his lecture of August 15, 1906, could be referred back in part or in whole to his Convocation speeches of 1890-92. His *Note of Dissent* to the *Report of the Indian Universities Commission* 1902 as well as his book entitled *A Few Thoughts on Education* (1901) constituted a bridge between 1890 and 1906.

The ideological affiliations of the two periods lie on the surface so far as Banerjee's own personality is concerned. But the National Council pattern that the educational revolution finally assumed was the creation of the social forces represented by such agencies as Vivekananda, Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, the Dawn Society, Jogen Ghose's Association for the Industrial Training of Indians Abroad, the triumphs of Japan over Russia (1904-05), the student revolt, and so forth. Among the most powerful of these forces is to be listed Bengali literature, *e.g.*, the works of Rangalal, Bankim, Bhudev, Hem, Nabin, Gnish, Kshnod, Dwijendralal, and last but not least, Tagore.

In the Convocation Address of 1890¹⁶ an item of Banerjee's advice to the graduates read as follows:

"If service and the liberal professions have no room for you, there are the vast material resources of the country which your scientific knowledge can enable you to utilize. There are the fields of literature and science scarcely trodden yet by our countrymen,—fields the cultivation of which, if it requires patient and arduous toil, promises a proportionately rich harvest. You can enrich the vernacular literature of your country with all that is valuable in Western learning and contribute to the literature of the West the precious treasures that lie hidden in your classic fields; and this literary traffic will be sure to yield adequate return."

The discontent with the existing state of things was patent. It could not be hidden. There was nothing to gloss over the lament-

¹⁶ *Reminiscences*, Part II, p. 82.

able lack of cultural and scientific facilities as well as technical and industrial openings.¹⁹

The same discontented personality was growing in Banerjee during the next sixteen years. So the Town Hall speech of August 16, 1906, contained statements like the following ²⁰. "Government service and the legal profession must be left out of consideration for some time at least. This is a drawback no doubt, but is it a serious one? The legal profession is over-stocked, and Government service in the higher grades is available only for a small number among the best graduates. And it will perhaps tend to the benefit of all concerned, if the energies and aspirations of the rising generation are to some extent diverted to other directions. If the two great old avenues are closed for our students, in the self-adjusting-beneficent economy of nature, fresh ones will be opened, for which the times are propitious. Agriculture, manufacture and commerce are the fields to which our educated young men must turn their attention, and the scheme of study framed by the Council makes provision for qualifying students for work in those fields."

The difference between 1906 and 1890 in the orientations was not negligible although the sameness of the personality could not be mistaken. It was a difference created by the transformation of *vishwa-shakti* (world-forces). Banerjee knew how to utilize this transformation in the interest of his countrymen.

As regards Banerjee's own ideology the cumulative evolution up to 1906 was hastened to a considerable extent by his association with the Indian Universities Commission in 1902. It had not taken him long to discover that the Government's attitude was thoroughly anti-Indian as well as anti-social. He lost no time, therefore, to take up the cry of India as well as to espouse the cause of the poor.

To the *Report of the Indian Universities Commission 1902* ²¹ Banerjee submitted a *Note of Dissent*. It was held by the European

¹⁹ The situation may be seen described in the sections on "Fifty Years of the University (1858-1907)" and "Scientists under Conditions of Discouragement" of B. K. Sarkar *Creative India* (Lahore, 1937), ch. on "Education and Research in Science."

²⁰ *Reminiscences*, Part II, pp. 225-26.

²¹ *Reminiscences*, Part I, pp. 161-168, Part II, pp. 177-78, 181-83.

members of the Commission who were in an overwhelming majority that "as a University is a Western institution, the European element should predominate in a Senate with only a small admixture of the Indian element to enable the European members to know what the views of the Indians are upon any question affecting them" This recommendation was stoutly opposed by Banerjee who advised that "educated Indians should be adequately represented on the Senate."

Among other things the Commission wanted to kill higher education by compelling the colleges to demand higher fees from students They proceeded on the hypothesis that "if a minimum rate of fees is not enforced, the standard of education and discipline is lowered" This recommendation was likewise emphatically contested by Banerjee who considered it unjust and unwise to fix a minimum fee rate for the purpose of excluding poor students of fair average merit from University education."

The patriotic and democratic spirit of Banerjee as manifest in this *Note of Dissent* left a deep impress on the mind of the Bengali people In August, 1902 a public meeting was held at the Town Hall, Calcutta, to applaud his action. He became a national hero of the first grade in the estimation of his countrymen. It was in that capacity that he was chosen as the President of the newly established Dawn Society by Satis Mookerjee. To the same reputation as nationalist and patriot Banerjee owed his recommendation as the President of the non-political Bengali republic in Tagore's *Swadeshi Samaj* (1904). That was his socio-spiritual status at the time of the Bengali revolution (1905).

PIONEERING IN PEDAGOGIC SCIENCE

The interhuman relations of the National Council Complex proved to be very congenial to Banerjee. He used to spend many hours every week in connection with diverse functions or topics in the atmosphere of Bengal National College Satis Mookerjee and his lieutenants had been intimate with him since 1902. The circle was enlarged with the other members of the N.C.E.'s teaching staff. It was before a meeting of the staff in 1907 that Banerjee delivered an address in Bengali on the basis of a printed manus-

cript. This subsequently became the brochure entitled *Shiksha* (Education). It dealt exclusively with the art of teaching. The pedagogic principles and methods discussed here were in keeping with the ideas developed by him in *A New Thoughts on Education* (1904), which had come out a year before the Bengali revolution.

In that publication in English he referred to the complexities and difficulties of the Indian educational problem as follows: "While, on the one hand, the circumstances of the country and the habits and sentiments of its people make Western methods and systems in their integrity often inapplicable to them, on the other hand, the control of education rests with those who from their early training and their imperfect knowledge of the East, naturally consider those methods and systems equally efficacious here, and seek to enforce them accordingly."

The *rationale* of "education on national lines and under national control" was therefore nothing new to him when the next year the Bengali revolution demanded it as an item of protest against the Government Circular.

The second edition of this book came out in 1910. It was enriched with a chapter on "professional and technical education and education on national lines". His Town Hall lecture of August 15, 1906 was boiled down into the relevant sections of this chapter. The experiences of this national education movement were also referred to.

The two publications of 1904 and 1907 are important documents of modern Bengali thought in pedagogics. Their pioneering character could be well appreciated by the present author when in 1907 he started investigations for his *Shiksha-Vijnan* (Science of Education) series in Bengali, of which the first volume was published in 1910, with an introduction by Hirendranath Datta.²²

Jnan-O-Karma IN BENGALI PHILOSOPHY

The National Council Complex had likewise some impacts on Banerjee's *Jnan-O-Karma* (Knowledge and Action), the Bengali book published in 1910. The teaching staff of the Bengal National College, and especially Satis Mookerjee and his lieutenants were

²² English edition published as *Introduction to the Science of Education* (London, 1913).

used to listening for hours to Banerjee's ideas on man and society. Part I of this book deals with the knower (subject), the knowable (object), the internal and external world, the limits, instruments and aims of knowledge. This discussion is essentially psychological. But fifty per cent of the contents is pedagogic. The material of *A Few Thoughts on Education* and *Shiksha* is incorporated in several chapters. In Part II, Banerjee deals with actions and duties. The topics are domestic, social, political and religious.

It is a book of some 475 pages and may be compared in certain respects to *Acharya Pravandha* (Treatise on *Mores* and Folkways), *Parivartik Pravandha* (Treatise on Family Life) as well as *Samajik Pravandha* (Treatise on Social Organization) by Bhudev Mookerjee (1825-94), the first systematic and original social scientist of modern Bengal. Indeed, Banerjee as educationist, philosopher and sociologist has many affinities with Bhudev and represents somewhat the next stage in evolution on the lines developed by the latter. In any case Banerjee may be found summed up in this Bengali work.

Banerjee's *Jnan-O-Karma* is a valuable landmark of orthodox Hindu thought moving along liberalized but far from revolutionary or even adequately reformist channels in the first decade of the twentieth century. The work deserves an intensive analysis both in East and West as a contribution to modern speculation in the problems of life and the world.

There is no subtlety or vagueness in Banerjee's analysis of man and the universe. It is thoroughly objective and precise. The realities are presented in a brutally realistic manner. The prescriptions and recommendations for the individual and the society are not only chips of realism but realism itself. The mental mould of the thinker is practical and pragmatic. It is an entirely utilitarian *Gestalt* that we encounter in the ideas and ideals of Banerjee. His methods and conclusions may be likened up, *in a general although not technical manner*, with the pragmatic logic and philosophy of John Dewey's *Human Nature and Conduct*.

Among his senior contemporaries Vidyasagar (1810-91) had made propaganda for widow-remarriage (1855). In 1870 Keshab Sen (1838-84) established the Indian Reform Association and was instrumental in the popularization of the principles of the civil

marriage legislation (1872). Bankim Chatterjee (1838-94) was a whole-hogger as a Comtist. As is well known, Comte established his positivism or religion of social service on essentially non-Christian and non-Catholic foundations. It was similarly on non-orthodox non-Hindu foundations that Bankim propagated the cult of humanity and social service in *Krishna-Charita* (1886) and *Dharma-tattva* (1888). In his essays (e.g., *Samya*, 1879) he showed, besides, some attempt at an assimilation of the egalitarian principles of Mill's economics and politics.²³

In Banerjee's *Jnan-O-Karma* there is no touch of any of the ideologies which in the perspective of Bengali Hindu mores were somewhat revolutionary or at any rate highly reformistic. Even in 1910 he hardly went beyond the fundamental premises of Bhudev Mookerjee, the exponent of Manu and Yajnavalkya, as adapted to a certain extent to nineteenth century conditions. Be it observed, however, that Keshab Sen, the most radical reformer or social Bolshevik of his time, was hardly in favour of widow-remarriage and University education of women. By 1910 Banerjee,²⁴ as a *Realpolitiker*, was constrained to accept these items as legally valid *faits sociaux*. But his theoretical position was almost identical with that of Sen. In the early years of the present century the ideologies of Sen and Banerjee might be equally treated as almost medieval survivals.

As for Banerjee's junior contemporaries, neither Vivekananda (1863-1902) nor Ramendrasundar Trivedi (1864-1922) succeeded in advancing an inch beyond himself in social philosophy. In the essays entitled *Samaj* (Society, 1908) by Tagore (1861-1941) there are idealistic notions of freedom from bondage or emancipation from tradition. But on the whole his ideologies were not much anti-Brahmanocratic. In daily life and habits Banerjee's differences from his senior and junior contemporaries were palpable. But coming to brass tags, it is questionable if in the theory of societal remaking *Jnan-O-Karma* is essentially different from the ideologies of professional reformists like Sen or, say, Tagore (?).

²³ See Subodhkrishna Ghoshal's paper on "Samajsastrī Bankimchandra" (Bankim as Sociologist) in *Samaj Vijnan* (Sociology), Vol. I, edited by Benoy Sarkar (1938), pp. 504-535.

²⁴ *Jnan-O-Karma* (3rd edition, 1921), pp. 277-293, 301-305, 315-317, 354-356, 442-453.

Like every other thinker Banerjee marks a transition,—very slow and in homoeopathic doses,—between the old and the new. Each one slightly emphasizes a point or two in the programme of social planning. Altogether, this treatise should not fail to indicate some of the *nearly universal* tendencies in the semi-liberal semi-conservative grooves of modern Bengali thinking.

The ideas and ideals of *Jnan-O-Karma* or for that matter of Vidyasagar, Bhudev, Sen, Bankim, Tagore, Vivekananda, and Trivedi have virtually been categorically rejected or rather found not sufficiently progressive in the judgment of Young Bengal's economically, politically and socially radical thinkers. Bengali social philosophies since the revolution of 1905, such as one may contact in the present author's *Villages and Towns as Social Patterns* (1941), are the furthest removed as much from Banerjee as from Vivekananda and Tagore ²⁵

All the same, Banerjee's *Jnan-O-Karma* possesses an extraordinary importance in Bengali literature as a systematic treatise on human personality in its individual aspects and social bearings. For one thing, it is not, like Tagore's *Samaj*, a collection of disconnected essays. Nor is it, like Trivedi's *Yajna-Katha* (The Doctrine of Vedic Sacrifice, 1921), an interpretation, although coherent, of an ancient socio-religious institution. It is a book of principles relating to life and conduct.

Besides, we do not encounter in *Jnan-O-Karma* a translation, compilation, summary or history of other thinkers' ideologies,—Eastern or Western, ancient or modern—such as the philosophical works by Indian authors of today, generally speaking, furnish us with. It is not, moreover, a text-book for the use of schools and colleges. The principles with which the volume deals may be derived from far and near (*e g*, the *Upanishads* or the *Gita* and Locke or Mill) by studies and investigations. But the author has made them his own. The results of genuine assimilation and the fruits of honest conviction have been brought together within its cover.

²⁵ B. K. Sarkar *Creative India* (Lahore, 1937), sections on "Socio-Religious Reconstruction" and "Muslim Renaissance" and *Villages and Towns as Social Patterns* (Calcutta, 1941), Chapters on "The Masculinization of Woman," "Castes as Social Configurations," and "The Logic-Magic Amalgam in Indian Political Theory."

Jnan-O-Karma acquaints us with the author's views and standpoints in regard to mind, matter, life, truth, good, duty, family, society, state and religion. We have here a comprehensive philosophy delivered by a person who has lived a full life. The treatment is logically worked out, well-ordered, and, last but not least, concise.

In Bengal we have very few such systematic and coherently worked-out philosophical treatises of a somewhat large size. Short essays, however brilliant and suggestive, are being excluded from the present consideration. For the middle of the nineteenth century may be singled out,—although not an original work,—*Vahya Vastu Sahit Manav Prakriti Samvandha Vichar* (Examination of the Relations between the External World and Human Nature, 1851-52) by Akshay Datta (1821-87). Bengal was introduced to scientific materialism in this work, which, however, is interested in the production of religious-mindedness. During the fourth quarter we have Bankim Chatterjee's *Dharma-tattva* (The Spirit or Theory of Religion, 1888). Positivism was the gift of this book to the Bengali *intelligentsia*. Perhaps very few Bengalis have realized that it contains un-Hindu Comtist teachings. Bhudev Mookerjee's *Samajik Pravandha* (Social Organization, 1892), an anti-Comtist and anti-Buckle treatise of substantial value, belonged to the same period. The ideas of assimilative unity and social progress based on tradition were emphasized through this work. It had a place in constructive nationalism, both economic and political. In Gooroodass Banerjee's *Jnan-O-Karma* we have a fourth treatise of the coherent and large-sized type, belonging as it does to the first decade of the twentieth century. It serves to propagate empirical commonsense views, realistic approach to human and interhuman problems, as well as utilitarian evaluations and pragmatic interpretations.

THE POST-GRADUATE DEPARTMENT OF THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY
vis-à-vis THE N C E

The educational revolution of 1905 found Gooroodass Banerjee and Asutosh Mookerjee as poles asunder. Banerjee was the champion of revolution, Mookerjee that of *status quo*. Sociographically, the National Council of Education by all means represented, so

to say, the "Reformation" It was the antipodes to the state-directed Calcutta University For Asutosh, the head of this *golaṁ-khana* (slave-factory), as it was called by revolutionists, the church triumphant, as it were, of medievalistic pedagogics and obsolete old-order ideologies, it was a tragic situation to accommodate himself as the formal opponent of his senior colleague and *guru* of 1890-93.

But the genuine position happened to be far otherwise The spiritual mantle of Banerjee had fallen on the younger shoulders of Mookerjee Indeed, the "ideas of 1905" succeeded in conquering Mookerjee and remaking his total personality in the most constructive manner conceivable Government-man as he was at the time, he captured the educational revolution itself within his powerful clutches and commanded it to transform and reconstruct the Calcutta University Among other things the Post-Graduate Department came into existence in the course of a decade or so

Had there been no National Council there might have been no Post-Graduate Department, at any rate, no Teaching University of the pattern that Calcutta has been witnessing since, say, 1920. Banerjee's patriotism and nationalist fervour took shape in the institution which was "exclusively under national control" and stayed "apart from the existing system" The same patriotism and nationalist fervour counselled Mookerjee to utilize the existing system and even under Government domination to deliver the goods as demanded by the Bengali revolution The entire situation,—profoundly antithetic as it was,—throws light on the psychology of revolutionists and the conflicting parties in a political crisis

If the National Council of Education embodied the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation was represented by the Post-Graduate Department Today in 1944 the Post-Graduate Department of the Calcutta University,—although not yet "exclusively under national control,"—supplies some of the items of "national education on national lines" as demanded by the revolutionists of 1905, offered by Gooroodass Banerjee, and blessed, idealized and sung of by Rabindranath Tagore It is neo-nationalism that is in evidence in the *milieu* of the reconstructed Calcutta University

From 1907 to 1911 the burden of Mookerjee's Convocation Addresses was two-fold On the one hand, he was exhorting the students "not to make politics, nor to be conspicuous in political

life” He wanted them in season and out of season to beware of “convenient or comfortable doctrines.” He was equally emphatic about preventing teachers who make politics the business of their lives from imparting “to the minds of our boys a premature bias towards politics”²⁶ This was the negative side of Mookerjee’s educational creativities. And in this there was hardly any difference between him and Banerjee

It is superfluous to observe that students of Bengal National College as a rule as well as many members of its teaching staff were too radical to agree with Banerjee in political views Not only Banerjee and President Rashbehary Ghose but even Satis Mookerjee and some of his lieutenants of the Dawn Society were treated as moderates, nay, loyalists of the same type as Asutosh Mookerjee of the University. The *milieu* of Principal Aurobindo Ghosh was dominant in the National Council Complex That was the epoch of Bipin Pal in the politics of Young Bengal

During the decade of the Bengali revolution (c 1905-14) Mookerjee as Vice-Chancellor of the University was pursuing a positive role as well He was eminently constructive in ideals and methods no less than in details and routine work

Mookerjee’s Convocation speeches were virtually annual reports about the steps taken towards the initiation of research and improvement of teaching This was the other side of his loyalist or moderatist politics The “priceless treasures of Indian inheritance” were being emphasized no less than the need for the cultivation of vernaculars. The demand for funds from the Government as well as from the public was systematically pressed. In all these items Mookerjee’s endeavours within the Senate Hall were but echoes of the educational revolution outside.

In 1911 he made it a point to refer to a “decided shortcoming of our higher teaching.” “Neither our Universities by their Regulations and courses of studies,” said he,²⁷ “nor our colleges by the instruction they impart, can be deemed to make adequate provision for what may comprehensively be called Ancient Indian History”

²⁶ *University of Calcutta Convocation Addresses*, Vol IV, 1907-14 (Calcutta, 1914), pp 1083, 1132, 1170

²⁷ *University of Calcutta Convocation Addresses*, Vol IV, 1907 14, pp 1082-1083, 1196, 1201 1231, 1235, 1408 1419.

It was shortcomings like this that had provoked the Bengali revolution Mookerjee as head of the *golam-khana* was thereby simply confirming and continuing the attacks of Banerjee and others associated with the National Council of Education. Under Mookerjee's guidance the University was moving along the same lines, ideologically considered, as the N C E "Should we not also make provision for studies peculiarly Indian," asked Mookerjee, "and bear in mind that India also had important Renaissances and Reformations of her own?" In posing this question Mookerjee was consciously and deliberately inviting with open arms the educational revolution of College Square into the University Campus.

Mookerjee's voice rose slowly but steadily from point to point. In the Convocation Address of March 16, 1912 he spoke of applying "our first efforts to create a true Teaching University" "The field is of enormous extent," he observed, "it comprises the whole circle of mental and moral, philological and historical science, and then again the entire ever-growing and multiplying group of the physical and natural sciences." On March 28, 1914 'the future of what I may call the New University' was already causing him anxieties, because "though much has been done, more remains to be done" He described the last eight years as the "years of unremittent struggle" They witnessed the birth throes of the *Teaching University* of Calcutta And this was indeed, to use his own words, "an epoch-making movement."

In this consummation at the state-directed University the educational revolution of the National Council complex justified itself *in toto* Down to 1914 Mookerjee's ideologies were the replicas of the cultural slogans of Aurobindo Ghosh of *Bande Mataram* and Bipin Pal of *New India*. He was voicing the sentiments as well as working out the problems of the Satis Mookerjee-Gooroodass Banerjee amalgam at the N.C.E. Nay, the linguistic demands and literary, scientific and philosophical visions of Ramendrasundar Trivedi, Huendranath Datta and other participants at the *Sahitya Sammelans* (Literary Conferences) held at diverse centres from Cossimbazar and Bhagalpur to Chinsurah and Chittagong were operating powerfully on his *psyche* and inspiring his altercations, debates and lectures The Gooroodass Banerjee-Asutosh Mookerjee antithesis was constantly and goalfully heading towards a grand synthesis.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, JADAVPUR

The general literary and scientific departments of the National Council of Education failed in course of time to attract students in adequate numbers. Ultimately they had to be dropped. It is only the scientific and technical lines that have succeeded in becoming popular and maintaining themselves. The College of Engineering and Technology at Jadavpur is virtually the only institution of importance run by the N C E at present.

The failure of the general departments can be easily accounted for. The students turned out of these departments could hardly find employment in any Government offices or institutions of semi-government character. This is the price paid by the Bengali people for placing an institution "exclusively under national character." It is in the Post-Graduate Department of the state-directed University that the N C E's cultural departments may be said to have finally found a secure home.

For the scholars of the technical department Government patronage in the matter of jobs is not a very serious affair. They can depend upon the industrial and commercial establishments for their careers. Jadavpur College has, therefore, been able to keep its head high with some 1250 students on the rolls towards the beginning of 1943.

It may be mentioned that a large number of mechanical, electrical and chemical engineers (over 1500) for whom the National Council has been responsible have started manufacturing and commercial establishments under their own direction or management. Their part in the development of the industrial *swadeshi* movement since 1910 is considerable. The expectations of Gooroodass Banerjee, Satis Mookerjee, Rashbehary Ghose, Brajendra-kishore Roychowdhury and other promoters of the educational revolution have, therefore, been realized in a certain measure.²⁸

²⁸ *Report of the National Council of Education—Bengal, 1942* (Jadavpur), p. 6, Appendix F (giving the names and occupations of 674 scholars of the N C E of whom some 45 are foreign schooled and foreign-factored). For "an analysis of the forty years' work of Jadavpur College (1905-45)" see B. K. Sarkar *Education for Industrialization* (Calcutta, 1946). In June, 1946 the N C E has accepted the financial patronage of the Government of Bengal and is at present expecting a grant aid from the Government of India (26th July).

SIR GOOROODASS AND THE PLACE OF OUR MOTHER TONGUE IN THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY CURRICULA

A. P. DASGUPTA

Among the thousand and one reasons why Bengal cherishes so dearly the memory of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee is the great stimulus which he gave to the development of Bengali language and literature by helping to obtain for his mother tongue its rightful place in the curricula of studies in the Calcutta University. Sir Gooroodass realised clearly that the encouragement of the great Indian vernaculars was necessary for the dissemination of knowledge among all sections of the people and for the full development of India as a nation and it was he who set the ball rolling that reached its first goal in the revised Matriculation regulations in 1935

When Sir Gooroodass became Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, Indian languages enjoyed only a minor position in the curricula of studies for the examinations of the University. The vernaculars had their place in the schedule of languages which could be taken up besides English at the Entrance Examination. But only women students could take up an Indian vernacular as a Second Language at the F.A and B A. Examinations, and it must be remembered that women candidates were very few in number at these examinations in those early days. The first Indian Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University took up spiritedly the cause of the principal living languages of India and in his address at the University Convocation in January, 1891 he formulated the policy that should be followed and the justification for the same. "I deem it not merely desirable, but necessary," he declared, "that we should encourage the study of those Indian vernaculars that have a literature, by making them compulsory subjects of our examinations in conjunction with their kindred classical languages. The Bengali language has now a rich literature that is well worthy of study, and Urdu and Hindi are also progressing fairly in the same direction." Continuing he said, "I firmly believe that we cannot have any thorough and extensive culture as a nation unless knowledge is disseminated through our

own vernaculars Consider the lesson that the past teaches The darkness of the middle ages of Europe was not completely dispelled until the light of knowledge shone through the medium of the numerous modern languages. So, in India, notwithstanding the benign radiance of knowledge that has shone on the higher levels of our society through one of the clearest media that exist, the dark depths of ignorance all round will never be illuminated until the light of knowledge reaches the masses through the medium of their own vernaculars” Thus the seer saw the vision and pointed the way Within two months the giant of action Sir Asutosh Mookerjee came forward with concrete proposals to give the Indian languages the position from which they might serve best the cause of the advancement of learning. On the 14th March, 1891 Sir Asutosh moved in the Syndicate.—

I. “that in the Arts examinations candidates who take up Sanskrit should also be examined in either Bengali, Hindi or Oriya, and those that take up Persian or Arabic should be examined also in Urdu

II “that the foregoing proposition be carried out in the manner following, that is to say.—

(A) In the F A Examination :—

- (i) In addition to the text books prescribed in the above-named classical languages, text books be also prescribed in the above-mentioned corresponding vernacular languages
- (ii) The first paper be devoted to the classical language and the second paper to questions on the vernacular text books prescribed, and to an original composition in the vernacular.

(B) In the B.A Examination —

- (i) In addition to the text books prescribed in the above-named classical languages, text books be also prescribed in the above-mentioned corresponding vernacular languages.
- (ii) For the pass papers the same scheme be adopted as for the F A Examination
- (iii) For the Honours papers, in lieu of the third paper on prose and poetry, a paper be set containing questions

on the vernacular text books and an original composition in the vernaculars

(C) In the M.A Examination, in addition to the English essay required by para 5 of the M A regulations, candidates be required to write an essay in one of the above-named vernaculars on any subject connected with the history or literature of the classical or vernacular language proposed by them."

The proposals were referred to the Faculty of Arts which discussed them on the 11th July, 1891 Messrs. Umeschandra Datta, Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Chandranath Bose, Mahendranath Ray, K. S. Macdonald, A M Bose and Haraprasad Sastri spoke in favour of the motion Raja Piyaṁmohan Mukherjee, Maulavi Serajul Islam, Col Janett, Nawab Abdul Latif, Mr Rajaninath Ray, Mr. Nilmani Mukherjee and MM Maheschandra Nyayaratna made speeches against the proposal The motion was put to the vote and was lost by a majority of seventeen votes to eleven.

Sir Asutosh not disheartened by the defeat again moved at a meeting of the Syndicate on the 20th July, 1891 " that the Syndicate recommend to the Senate that a Committee may be appointed to consider whether it is possible to devise some scheme by means of which greater encouragement may be given by the University to the study of the Indian vernaculars than has been hitherto done." The Syndicate did not see their way to " accede to the request " Notwithstanding this temper of the Syndicate, the members had again to hear from Sir Gooroodass Banerjee at the Convocation in 1892 that, " One great reason why our University education fails to awaken much original thinking, is because it is imparted through the medium of a difficult foreign language, the genius of which is so widely different from that of our own. The acquisition of such a language must to a great extent be the work of imitation ; and the habit of imitation gradually becomes so deep-rooted as to influence our intellectual operations generally Again, the costly foreign drapery in which our students have to clothe their thoughts, taxes their limited mental resources to an extent which does not leave enough for the proper feeding and fostering of thought."

Four years passed away before the champions of the Vernacular again took up arms in support of their mother tongue and

a sound education. On the 23rd November, 1895 the Syndicate read a letter from Mr. R. C. Dutt, President, Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, submitting the following propositions for their consideration, "That at the F.A. Examination and at the B.A. Examination in the A Course, when a classical language is taken as the third subject, a paper be set containing (i) passages in English for translation into one of the vernaculars of India recognised by the Senate and (ii) a subject of original composition in one of the said vernaculars, text books being recommended as model of style." The letter also requested the Vice-Chancellor and Syndicate to consider how far, under the circumstances, the following resolution of the Parishat could be given effect to—'That the University be moved to adopt a Regulation to the effect that in History, Geography, and Mathematics at the Entrance Examination, the answers may be given in any of the living languages recognised by the Senate'

The letter was placed before the Faculty of Arts and on the 28th March, 1896, Sir Gooroodass Banerjee moved the Faculty to appoint a Committee to consider and report on the proposals of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishat. A motion that a Committee be appointed to consider the first proposal of the Parishat was carried by 22 votes for and 21 against it. The motion for the appointment of a Committee to report on the second resolution of the Parishat, i.e., to enable Entrance candidates to answer papers in the Vernacular, was lost.

On the 12th December, 1896, the Committee reported to the Faculty of Arts that, "We recommend that an optional paper requiring an original essay to be written in Bengali or Urdu, be set at the F.A. and B.A. Examinations, proficiency in which will entitle a candidate to a special certificate, but will not be counted towards a pass." The words "Original Composition" were substituted for the words "An original essay to be written" and the report thus modified was adopted by the Faculty. When this matter came up to the Syndicate, that body provided for composition papers only in Bengali and Urdu. Necessary changes in the Regulations were made by the Syndicate on 9th January, 1897, ratified by the Senate on the 30th January, 1897, and approved by the Government in their letter of the 26th February, 1897.

It was also decided by the Syndicate (8th May, 1897) that this addition to the F.A. and B.A. Regulations providing for an optional paper on original composition in Bengali or Urdu was to come into effect from the examinations of 1898, and this optional paper was to carry 100 marks:

Thus very little was achieved in the nineteenth century towards the realisation of Sir Gooroodass's dream of disseminating knowledge "through our own vernaculars" and of "making them compulsory subjects of our examination."

A distinct advance was made when the new regulations for the various examinations were introduced in 1910. The Indian Vernaculars were made compulsory subjects for the Matriculation, Intermediate and B.A. Examinations. Regarding these changes Sir Asutosh Mookerjee in his address as Vice-Chancellor at the Convocation in 1907 said, "To give the student some power of expression, unquestionably the best medium is his own language in the first place, with the structure and literature of which he ought to have a tolerable familiarity. The Regulations consequently insist upon a knowledge of a student's own vernacular and a power to practise composition as essential at all stages of his career from Matriculation to Graduation. This recognition of the claim of the Indian vernaculars will, I believe, have far-reaching consequences of the healthiest character." In the long deliberations which led to these changes Sir Gooroodass took a leading part.

It may be said, however, that when Sir Gooroodass passed away in 1918 the University had only just started on the path pointed out by him in 1891.

It was left for Sir Asutosh Mookerjee to take up the fight again in 1921 and the honour of translating the ideals of Sir Gooroodass into action fell to the Vice-Chancellorship of Dr. S. P. Mookerjee. Today instruction is imparted up to the Matriculation stage in the vernaculars. Several Indian languages are in the list of vernaculars from which a candidate for the Matric, Intermediate or the B.A. may choose his own. The major Indian vernaculars take rank equal to English or any other subject in importance in the curricula for the examinations and a person can qualify for the highest degree of the University in Modern Indian languages.

GOOROODASS BANERJEE

AMAL HOME

I consider it to be a great privilege to be asked to contribute to the Memorial Volume which is being brought out to celebrate the centenary of the birth of a great Bengalee and a great Indian—Gooroodass Banerjee. A forgetful race of young people—the present generation—is unfamiliar today with his name and achievements. Along with many others they have cast him into the shades of oblivion. The Centenary Celebration Committee is, therefore, to be sincerely congratulated on their noble attempt to resuscitate the revered memory of Gooroodass Banerjee by publishing a permanent record of his great services to the country. Very few deserve this honour better.

Gooroodass Banerjee belonged to a period when Bengal produced a race of giants,—men distinguished in religious and social reform, in letters and law, in politics and public life. But even among them Gooroodass stood unchallenged. A distinguished scholar, a great lawyer, an ideal judge, a far-seeing educationist, a fervent patriot, Gooroodass Banerjee was a prince among men. For upwards of fifty years he held a place in the esteem and love of his compatriots unequalled by any of his contemporaries. There was none who was looked upon with greater respect and admiration. And how great was this respect and admiration will be realized when it is stated that the choice of absolute leadership of the *Swadesh Samaj* projected by Rabindranath Tagore fell upon him when the Poet visualised and adumbrated his scheme for the reorganization of the Hindu community on the basis of constructive nationalism. Rabindranath, who differed fundamentally from Gooroodass on his religious and social outlook, proposed that he was to be made the *Samaj-pati* (the “Leader of Society”) with absolute powers. In the nobility of his character, in the purity of his life, in the steadfast manner in which he pursued the ideals he cherished, Gooroodass had indeed no peer.

The most tolerant of men, an unflinching and unbending independence of character and opinion marked Gooroodass Banerjee. Stern as steel in the cause of righteousness, he was sweet reasonableness personified. A more engaging, a more modest, and a

more dignified personality was difficult to find. Though he occupied the highest position in the caste-hierarchy, no Brahmin was ever more free from caste-pride or prejudice than Gooroodass. He performed Brahminical rites as a matter of duty enjoined by the Hindu scriptures, but he never felt that he was in any way a better man because of that. He was one of the most finished products of Western education, yet he held the culture of his country in deepest esteem and drank deep at its fountain. He was conservative in social matters but his conservatism was based on rationalism, not on blind faith. His was an integrated personality in the fullest sense of the term.

The life of such a man is a legacy to his country and race. Such lives represent what is best and noblest in our heritage,—an ideal and inspiration for centuries to come. May the memory of Gooroodass Banerjee remain an abiding asset with his people.

I had the rare privilege of coming into personal contact with Gooroodass when I joined the Calcutta University Institute as a Junior Member in 1910. Sir Gooroodass, who had retired from the Bench of the Calcutta High Court some years ago, was our President and Professor Benoyendranath Sen, who taught History at the Presidency College, was our Honorary Secretary.

In spite of all his eminence Sir Gooroodass was accessible to the humblest of us. He would come very often, at the end of a long series of engagements that crowded his day's programme, and sit with students around him and talk to them and, what was more, listen to them. His courtesy was unique. To him the Under-Secretaries elected by the Junior Members were so many colleagues. He would treat us as such, and even when we proved unreasonable sometimes he would remonstrate and not reprove, persuade and never press. Nothing could disturb his equanimity,—he was dignity personified. Once only I saw him agitated. A play was being staged on the boards of the Institute by the Junior Members. A young actor was guilty of a slight breach of decorum, hardly noticed by the audience. But nothing could escape Sir Gooroodass's eagle eye. He quietly left the hall and retired to the Committee room from where he sent for one or two of us and gently but firmly expressed his displeasure at what had happened. We begged his forgiveness but nothing could induce him to return.

to the auditorium. The performance over, we brought our erring and penitent friend to him. He saw him and forgave him and never once afterwards referred to the incident. It was closed.

It was by example such as this that Sir Gooroodass set before us high ideals of conduct. He never preached. He would only sometimes tell us of the rigours he had gone through for self-discipline. One such story I remember and is worth recording. From Simla he was travelling down to Calcutta in the Viceroy's 'Special' at the end of the deliberations of the Calcutta University Commission of which he was a member. Along with him was his son, Saratchandra Banerjee, who held high office under the Government of India. At Cawnpore or some such place Lord Curzon sent an A.D.C. to Gooroodass with a request to see him in his saloon. After the Chancellor and the ex-Vice-Chancellor had been closeted for some time discussing and arguing some of the problems facing the Commission, on which, it is well-known, they had fundamental differences, came lunch-time. Lord Curzon brought the discussion to a close reminding Dr. Banerjee, as he then was, that it was time he returned to his carriage and had his midday meal. Gooroodass thanked the Viceroy adding, however, that he did not eat anything in the train. Lord Curzon was so surprised that he could not believe it. He asked Gooroodass again and was told that Ganges water, which he carried when travelling, was the only thing that he permitted himself. "But how about your son?" asked the almost incredulous Viceroy. "He cannot eat, your Excellency when his father fasts," came the reply, "but I see, that he takes some home-made sweets he carries with him." "No, Dr. Banerjee, I cannot eat while you fast. I shall have the train stopped for you so that you may get down and have your meals with due Brahminical observances." Gooroodass begged the Viceroy not to have the train delayed and inconvenience himself. But Lord Curzon would not listen, he had made up his mind. He rang the bell, sent for his A.D.C. and asked where train stopped next. "Allahabad, your Excellency." "We stop at Allahabad till Dr. Banerjee has his meals." So the great Viceroy's 'Special' stopped at Prayag at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamuna longer than the scheduled time and the son cooked a simple meal.

for his father and himself on the sands of the holy *Sangam*. Only after Gooroodass had eaten did the Viceregal train move.

One of us asked him if the observance of caste rules was worth all this trouble, as it seemed to us, and if such strict adherence to them was really essential to Hinduism. He said he knew many good and honest Hindus would not do what he did, and it might not indeed be necessary for the observance of caste but he thought that Hinduism called upon its votaries for self-control, and he believed in such self-discipline. He laid emphasis not so much on the social aspect of the matter as on the personal aspect of it. We never found Gooroodass Banerjee dogmatic.

Another memory of Gooroodass I cherish is in connection with the death of Prof. Benoyendranath Sen. Gooroodass held him in high esteem. Benoyendranath Sen was a scholar and a humanist. He was a scholar by instinct as well as achievement, and his humanism had its springs in his living faith. His was a personality that seemed to live in a world of its own, yet he exercised the most profound influence on his pupils and all those who came in touch with him. As Secretary of the Calcutta University Institute he was our idol.

I have spoken of Benoyendranath's "living faith." He bore striking testimony to it during his prolonged illness, which ended fatally early in 1913. For more than a year he was laid up,—the victim of a most painful malady. But he bore all his sufferings in a manner which left an undying impression on all who saw him in his sick bed. Despite the deepening shadow of approaching death the spirit rose above the ailments of the flesh. Like a child he clung to the Divine Mother, never complaining, never faltering, he surrendered himself completely to Her will. He had heard the Great Call, he was preparing himself for it.

The end came on the 13th April, 1913. I still remember the short and erect figure of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee clad in his usual *choga* and *chapkan*, the short, stiff tasselled turban crowning his head, walking behind the bier from Mechuabazar Street to the Institute and the tall white-haired Prof. Henry Stephen next to him as we carried the precious burden, robed in silk, decked with flowers. The memory of that funeral abides with me with the picture of Gooroodass Banerjee standing out in bold relief.

শ্রদ্ধানিবেদন

স্বামী বিবজানন্দ

স্বর্গীয় স্যাব গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দীর বাংলায় এক উদ্ভূত জ্যোতিষকল্পে আবির্ভূত হয়েছিলেন। সমগ্র বাংলা তাঁকে বুকে ধরে গৌরবন্বিত করেছে। আনন্দের জাতীয় জীবনের এক বিষম সন্ধিক্ষেপে যে কয়টা মহাপ্রাণ ননীষী জাতির অগ্রগতির পথে আদর্শের বহাগ্নিশিখা হাতে নিয়ে দেখা দিয়েছিলেন গুরুদাস তাঁদেরি অন্যতম।

গুরুদাসের জীবনে প্রাচ্য ও পাশ্চাত্যের জ্ঞানবয়রাশির ননোনা সমন্বয় গানিত হয়েছিল। তাঁর চরিত্রে ফুটে উঠেছিল প্রকৃত ব্রাহ্মণের স্বলত তেজ ও সত্যনিষ্ঠা, নিজেই দেশ, সমাজ, শিক্ষা ও সংস্কৃতির প্রতি প্রগাঢ় ভালবাসা ও শ্রদ্ধা, এবং হিন্দুধর্মের সর্বোচ্চ আদর্শসমূহকে জীবনের প্রত্যেক কাজে প্রতিফলিত করবার ঐকান্তিক আগ্রহ ও প্রচেষ্টা।

এমন হৃদয়বান্ নির্ভীক পনহিতব্রতী মহাপুরুষদের স্মরণ করলে এবং তাঁদের জীবনাদর্শকে অনুসরণ করলে বাঙালীর অশেষ কল্যাণ হবে সন্দেহ নাই। বঙ্গমাতার এই কৃতী সন্তানের জন্মশত-বার্ষিকী কলিকাতায় এবং অন্যান্য স্থানে অনুষ্ঠিত হচ্ছে, বড়ই আনন্দের বিষয়। স্বর্গীয় গুরুদাসের পুণ্যস্মৃতির উদ্দেশ্যে আমি আমার হৃদয়ের গভীর শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদন করছি।

স্মর গুরুদাসের স্মৃতিতর্পণ

মহামহোপাধ্যায় শ্রীদুর্গাচরণ সাংখ্যবেদান্ততীর্থ

কয়েক দিন পূর্বে বঙ্গজননী কৃতী সন্তান ও বাগ্‌দেবীর চিবসেবক পুণ্যস্মৃতি স্যাব গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের শতবার্ষিকী স্মৃতি পূজার পুণ্যানুষ্ঠান শ্রদ্ধাসহকারে সাডম্বে পবিসমাগ্ধ হইয়াছে। যদিও স্যাব গুরুদাস আডম্বেপ্রিয় বা পূজা-গ্রহণের পক্ষপাতী ছিলেন না, তথাপি তাঁহার গুণানুবাগী স্মৃতিবৃন্দ যে এই শুভানুষ্ঠানের ব্যবস্থা করিয়াছেন, তাহাতে তাঁহারা নিজেদের বর্তব্যপবায়ণতাবই পবিচয় দিয়াছেন। যাহারা সেই স্বর্গীয় মহাত্মার পুণ্যস্মৃতির উদ্বোধন এবং তদুদ্দেশ্যে শ্রদ্ধাঞ্জলি-নিবেদনের জন্য অক্লান্ত পবিশ্রম স্বীকার করিয়াছেন, তাঁহারা নিশ্চয়ই দেশবাসীর নিকট অশেষ বন্যবাদেব পাত্ৰ।

স্যাব গুরুদাস এখনও বাঁচিয়া থাকিলে তাঁহার বয়ঃপবিসাণ শত বৎসবেবও অধিক হইত, সন্দেহ নাই। কিন্তু তাহা তাঁহার পক্ষে সূখ ও গাতিপ্রদ হইত কিনা, তাহা বলিতে পাৰা যায় না। তবে তিনি বাঁচিয়া থাকিলে বঙ্গজননী অঙ্কস্থান আলোকিত থাকিত এবং দেশবাসীর অতঃকরণও অভিমাণে স্ফীত ও আনন্দে উৎফুল্ল হইত, তাহাতে সন্দেহ নাই। কিন্তু নিয়তি কাহাবও মুখাপেক্ষা করে না। ইহাই হিন্দুজাতির দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস ও সাঙ্ঘনাদায়ক।

হিন্দুজাতি জানে ও বিশ্বাস করে, সমবণাতীত কাল হইতে জীবজগতে এই যে জন্ম-মৃত্যুর প্রবাহ চলিতেছে, ইহা আকস্মিক বা বিনা কাৰণে সংঘটিত হয় না। ইহাব পশ্চাতে এমন একটা কাৰণ লুকাযিত আছে, যাহা সাধাবণ দৃষ্টিতে প্রত্যক্ষ না হইলেও বিবেকদৃষ্টির অগোচর নহে। তাহাব নাম হইতেছে দৈব, নিয়তি ও প্রাজ্ঞন কর্ণ প্রভৃতি। এই প্রাজ্ঞন কর্ণই জীববর্গের জন্ম ও মৃত্যুর মূল কাৰণ ও নিয়ামক। সেই প্রাজ্ঞন কর্ণানুসাবে অর্থাৎ কর্ণফল-ভোগেব নিমিত্তই জীবগণ পৃথিবীতে

আগমন কৰে, এবং ফলভোগেৰ উপযোগী মনুষ্য, পশু, পক্ষী ও কীট-পতঙ্গাদি শৰীৰ ধাৰণ কৰিতে বাধ্য হয়। ইহাবই নাম জন্ম। প্ৰাক্তন কৰ্ম্ম অনেক প্ৰকাৰ এবং তাহাৰ ফলও বহু প্ৰকাৰ। সেই সকল ফল-ভোগেৰ জন্য বিভিন্ন প্ৰকাৰ দেশে, কালে, স্থানে ভিনু ভিনু দেহ ধাৰণ কৰা আবশ্যিক হয়। দেহগুলি কৰ্ম্মফল-ভোগেৰ যন্ত্ৰমাত্ৰ বুঝিতে হইবে।

অভিনেতা যেমন অভিনয়েৰ উপযোগী পোষাক-পৰিচ্ছদ পৰিধান কৰিয়া বহুদুৰ প্ৰবেশ কৰত নানাপ্ৰকাৰ অভিনয় কৰিতে থাকে, এবং অভিনয় শেষ হইলেই বহুদুৰ ত্যাগ কৰিয়া চলিয়া যাইতে বাধ্য হয়, জীৱনেও তেমনই কৰ্ম্মানুকৰণ দেহযন্ত্ৰ গ্ৰহণ কৰিয়া সংসাৰ-বহুদুৰ প্ৰবেশ কৰে, এবং আপনাৰ অভিনয় (কৰ্ম্মফল-ভোগ) শেষ হইবামাত্ৰ সংসাৰক্ষেত্ৰ ত্যাগ কৰিয়া আপনাৰ গন্তব্য স্থানে চলিয়া যায়, ক্ষণকালও সেখানে থকা তাহাৰ পক্ষে সম্ভবপৰ হয় না। ইহাবই নাম মৃত্যু। ধনী দৰিদ্ৰ, মূৰ্খ পণ্ডিত প্ৰভৃতি সকলেই এই কৰ্ম্মপৰবৰ্ত্তাকৰণ শাস্ত্ৰত নিয়ম মানিয়া চিবকাল চলিয়াছে, এখনও চলিতেছে এবং সুদূৰ ভবিষ্যতেও চলিতে বাধ্য থাকিবে। স্যব গুৰুদাসও এই নিয়মেৰ বশীভূত হইয়াই আসিয়াছিলে, এবং আপনাৰ বিমল যশঃপ্ৰভাষ বহুদেশ উদ্ভাসিত কৰিয়াছিলে, এবং আপনাৰ কৰ্ম্ম পৰিসমাপ্ত কৰিয়া নিয়তিৰ আহ্বানে গন্তব্য স্থানে চলিয়া গিয়াছে।

তিনি চলিয়া গেলেও, লোকচক্ষুৰ অন্তৰালে অবস্থান কৰিলেও, তিনি যে উচ্চ শিক্ষা, সৌজন্য, শিষ্ট ব্যবহাৰ, বিমল চৰিত্ৰ, ধৰ্ম্মানুবাগ, স্বদেশ প্ৰেম এবং ব্ৰাহ্মণোচিত ত্যাগ ও তেজস্বিতাৰ উচ্চ আদৰ্শ দেশবাসীৰ হৃদয়পটে অঙ্কিত কৰিয়া গিয়াছে, তাহাই তাঁহাকে অমৰ চিবস্মৰণীয় কৰিয়া ৰাখিবে।

বস্তুতই তাঁহাৰ চৰিত্ৰে এমন কতকগুলি বৈশিষ্ট্য ছিল যাহা সচৰাচৰ অনেকেৰ মাজেই দেখিতে পাওয়া যায় না। তিনি উচ্চশিক্ষায় গভীৰ পাণ্ডিত্য লাভ কৰিয়াও অভিমানে স্ফীত ছিলেন না, এবং কৰ্ম্মক্ষেত্ৰে উচ্চপদে অধিষ্ঠিত থাকিয়াও কখনও অন্যেৰ প্ৰতি অবজ্ঞা বা অনাদৰ কৰিতেন না।

বিধৰ্ম্মীৰ সংসৰ্গে থাকিয়াও তিনি আপনাৰ ধৰ্ম্মবিশ্বাসকে কখনও শূন্য কৰিতেন না। সৌজন্য ও সদালাপেৰ অনুবোধে মিথ্যাৰ প্ৰশ্ন দিতেন না। তিনি সাধাৰণতঃ শিশুসুলভ অমায়িকতা-গুণে অতি কোমলহৃদয় ছিলেন, কিন্তু কৰ্ত্তব্যেৰ অনুবোধে বজ্ৰাদপি কঠোৰতা অবলম্বন কৰিতেও পৰাঙমুখ হইতেন না। তাঁহাৰ আৰ একটা বৈশিষ্ট্য ছিল এই যে, যাহাৰ একবাৰ তাঁহাৰ সংশ্ৰবে থাকিতেন, তাঁহাবাই তাঁহাৰ সদালাপে, মধুৰ ব্যবহাৰ ও প্ৰতিভাদৰ্শনে মুগ্ধ হইতেন, এবং অনভিমত হইলেও তাঁহাৰ স্বীকৃত সিদ্ধান্তেৰ প্ৰতিবাদ কৰিতে সাহসী হইতেন না, তিনি কিন্তু কাহাবো অপসিদ্ধান্ত বিনা বাক্যব্যয়ে গ্ৰহণ কৰিতে সন্মত হইতেন না। ধৰ্ম্ম, সমাজ, সদাচাৰ ও নীতি বা অন্য বিষয়ে কেহ কখনও বিকৃত মতবাদ উত্থাপন কৰিলে, তিনি তাহাৰ প্ৰতিবাদ কৰিতে কখনও কুণ্ঠিত হইতেন না। এবং সাধুজন-পৰিগৃহীত মতবাদ প্ৰকাশ কৰিতে কখনও কুণ্ঠাবোধ কৰিতেন না। পিতামাতাৰ প্ৰতি অসাধাৰণ ভক্তিপ্ৰবণতা তাঁহাৰ আৰ এক বিশেষ গুণ ছিল। যখনই স্মৰণ পাইতেন, তখনই তিনি পিতামাতাৰ স্নেহ, গমতা, বাৎসল্য ও ধৰ্ম্মপৰায়ণতাৰ কথা আবেগময়ী ভাষায় প্ৰকাশ কৰিতেন, এবং তাঁহাদেৰ আতৰিক ধৰ্ম্মভাবই যে তাঁহাৰ শৈশব-হৃদয়ে ধৰ্ম্মবিশ্বাসেৰ বেথাপাত কৰিয়াছিল, একথা বলিয়া তিনি বিশেষ গৌৰৱ ও আনন্দ অনুভৱ কৰিতেন, এবং পিতামাতাৰ প্ৰতি যে অচলা ভক্তি এবং তাঁহাদেৰ যে অমোঘ আশীৰ্বাদ, তাহাই তাঁহাৰ জীৱনেৰ পবিত্ৰতা ও সৰ্ববিধ উন্নতি লাভেৰ প্ৰধান কাৰণ, এ বিশ্বাস তিনি শেষ মুহূৰ্ত্ত পৰ্যন্ত হৃদয়ে পোষণ কৰিতেন ও তাহাতেই তৃপ্তিলাভ কৰিতেন। এইকৰণ আদৰ্শ চৰিত্ৰ মহানুভবেৰ স্মৃতিপূজা শতবাৰ্ষিকী না হইয়া প্ৰতিবাৰ্ষিকী হওয়াই অধিকতৰ সঙ্গত ও শোভন হয়।

উপসংহাৰে বক্তব্য এই যে, তিনি প্ৰাক্তন স্মৃতিৰ প্ৰেৰণায় জগতে আসিয়াছিলে, আপনাৰ কৰ্ত্তব্য পৰিসমাপ্ত কৰিয়া নিয়তিৰ আহ্বানে নিজেৰ গন্তব্য স্থানে চলিয়া গিয়াছে, শত চেষ্টায়ও

তাঁহাৰ আৰু প্ৰত্যাবৰ্ত্তন সম্ভৱ হইবে না, স্মৃতিৰ তাঁহাৰ পবিত্ৰ স্মৃতি জাগৰণ বাধা ভিন্ন আন গত্যন্তৰ নাই। কিন্তু একথাও সত্য যে, সূৰ্য্যদেৱ যেন উদয়েৰ সন্মুখে সন্মুখে আপনাব প্ৰভাৱ পৃথিৱীৰে আলোকিত কৰিয়া সাংগ সময়ে অস্তাচলে যান, এবং গাইবান সময়েও আপনাব আলোচনাৰ দিয়দংশ পৃথিৱীতে বাখিয়া যান, তেনি স্বনামবন্য পুণ্যস্মৃতি স্যৰ গুৰুদাস বান্ধোপাধ্যায়ও ভগ্ননাবণ কৰিয়া জগতে যে উজ্জল কীৰ্ত্তিমালা প্ৰকটিত কৰিয়া গিয়াছে, গাইবান সময়ে তাহা তিনি সন্মুখে কৰিয়া লইয়া যান নাই, এখানেই তাহা বাখিয়া গিয়াছে, তাহা দেশনাগী চিববাল প্ৰত্যক্ষ বনিনে—তাঁহাৰ সেই যশোময় শৰীৰ অনব হইয়া থাকিবে। ইহাই “জীৱনান্তে জীবন” এবং ইহাদেই বলে “বীৰ্জ্যস্য স জীবতি”।

প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতে দণ্ডনীতি

মহামহোপাধ্যায় পাণ্ডিত শ্ৰীযোগেজনাথ তৰ্বনেন্দাসতীৰ্থ

স্যৰ গুৰুদাস আদৰ্শ ন্যায়াধীশ ও ব্যবহাৰজ্ঞ ছিলেন। যেন তাঁহাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্যৰ ও জীবনযাত্রা-প্ৰণালীতে প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতেৰ ব্ৰাহ্মণ্যৰ আদৰ্শ নুষ্টি বাৰণ কৰিয়াছিল তেনেই তাঁহাৰ ব্যবহাৰ-শাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰয়োগে ও ন্যায়বিচাৰে প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতবৰ্ষেৰ দণ্ডনীতিৰ মূল তত্ত্বগুলি পৰিস্ফুট হইয়াছিল; স্মৃতিৰ তাঁহাৰ জন্মশতবাৰ্ষিকী উপলক্ষে প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় দণ্ডনীতিৰ আলোচনা অত্যাৱশ্যক হইবে না মনে কৰিয়াই এই প্ৰবন্ধেৰ অবতারণা কৰা হইয়াছে।

আমাদেৰ বাংলা দেশেৰ হিন্দু জনতা বেদ স্মৃতি পুৰাণ প্ৰভৃতি নামগুলিৰ সহিত সুপৰিচিত। শিক্ষিত জনতা সাংখ্য পাতঞ্জল প্ৰভৃতি দৰ্শন-শাস্ত্ৰেৰও সংবাদ ৰাখেন। বিদ্যালয়ে মহাবিদ্যালয়ে বেদ-স্মৃতি, ন্যায়-মীমাংসা প্ৰভৃতি প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় শাস্ত্ৰেৰ কিছু কিছু আলোচনাও হয়। কিন্তু প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতেৰ দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰেৰ সহিত আমাদেৰ পৰিচয় নাই বলিলেও অত্যাৱশ্যক হয় না। দণ্ডনীতি, অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ, ৰাজনীতি, ৰাজধৰ্ম্ম প্ৰভৃতি শব্দ আমাদেৰ শাস্ত্ৰে একই অৰ্থে প্ৰযুক্ত হইয়াছে। এই শব্দগুলিৰ সহিত আমবা পৰিচিতই নহি। বৰ্ত্তমান সময়ে আমাদেৰ দেশে অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ নামে যে বিদ্যা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্ৰভৃতিতে আলোচিত হয়, তাহা আমাদেৰ দেশেৰ বিদ্যা নহে। তাহা সম্পূৰ্ণ ভাবে বিদেশী। এই জন্য অনেকেৰ ধাৰণা দণ্ডনীতি বা অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ আমাদেৰ দেশেৰ বিদ্যাই নহে। যাঁহাবা আমাদেৰ দেশেৰ প্ৰাচীন শাস্ত্ৰেৰ খবৰ ৰাখেন, তাঁহাবা দণ্ডনীতি বা অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ নামেৰ সহিত পৰিচিত হইলেও এই বিদ্যাৰ উপযোগিতা সম্বন্ধে সন্দেহান। যাঁহাবা শিক্ষিত ধাৰ্ম্মিক হিন্দু, তাঁহাবা মনে কবেন—দণ্ডনীতি বা অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনায় হিন্দুৰ কল্যাণ হওযা ত দূৰে থাকুক, হিন্দুৰ হিন্দুয়ানীই নষ্ট হইয়া যাইবে। এই জন্য সুদীৰ্ঘ দিন হইতে আমাদেৰ দেশে এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনা বিলুপ্ত হইয়াছে। বেবল আমাদেৰ বাংলা দেশেই যে এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনা বিলুপ্ত হইয়াছে, তাহা নহে, কিন্তু আ-সমুদ্ৰ হিমালয় সমগ্ৰ ভাৰতবৰ্ষেই এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনা সুদীৰ্ঘ দিন হইতে বিলুপ্ত হইয়া গিয়াছে। অতীত দেউ হাজাৰ বৎসবেৰ মধ্যে এই ভাৰতবৰ্ষে অনেক ঋণ ঋণ হিন্দুৰাজ্যেৰ অভ্যুদয় ও পতন হইয়াছে, কিন্তু সেই সেই ৰাজ্যেৰ পৰিচালকবৰ্গ এই দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনা কবেন নাই। সুদীৰ্ঘ অতীত কাল হইতে ভাৰতেৰ মনীষিগণ এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনায় বিমুগ্ধ হইয়াছেন। পুৰাণ, ন্যায়, মীমাংসা, ধৰ্ম্মশাস্ত্ৰ প্ৰভৃতি শাস্ত্ৰ বলিয়া পৰিগণিত হইলেও দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰ শাস্ত্ৰেৰ পৰ্য্যায় হইতে

বিচিহ্ন হইয়াছে, কিন্তু স্বপ্ৰাচীন মনুসংহিতা, মহাভাৰত প্ৰভৃতি গ্ৰন্থ আলোচনা কৰিলে দেখা যায় প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতেৰ মনীষিগণ এই দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰৰ আলোচনায় বিশেষ আগ্ৰহান্বিত ছিলেন। মনুসংহিতাৰ সপ্তম ও অষ্টম অধ্যায় এই দণ্ডনীতিৰ আলোচনায় পৰিপূৰ্ণ। ভগবান্ স্বায়ম্ভুৱ মনু সপ্তম অধ্যায়ে চাৰিটি বিদ্যাৰ উল্লেখ কৰিয়াছেন—ত্ৰয়ী, দণ্ডনীতি, আনুীক্ষিকী ও বাৰ্ত্তাশাস্ত্ৰ। মহাভাৰতেৰ বাজৰ্ম্মপৰ্ব্বৰ অন্তৰ্গত দণ্ডনীতি-সূত্ৰাধ্যায়েও ত্ৰয়ী, আনুীক্ষিকী, বাৰ্ত্তা ও দণ্ডনীতি এই চাৰিটি বিদ্যাবই উল্লেখ কৰা হইয়াছে। ন্যায়সূত্ৰেৰ ভাষ্যকাৰ ভগবান্ বাৎস্যায়নও এই চাৰিটি বিদ্যাবই উল্লেখ কৰিয়াছেন এবং উদ্ভ্যোতবনচাৰ্য্য প্ৰভৃতি এই চাৰিটি শাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰতিপাদ্য বিষয় বিশদভাবে প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিয়াছেন। বৌদ্ধীন্দ্ৰ অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ বিদ্যাগনুদ্দেশ্য প্ৰবৰণেও এই চাৰিটি বিদ্যাৰ বৰ্থাই বিশদভাবে আলোচিত হইয়াছে। এই বিদ্যাগনুদ্দেশ্য প্ৰবৰণে দণ্ডনীতিই একমাত্ৰ বিদ্যা, অন্য সমস্ত বিদ্যাই এই দণ্ডনীতিৰ অৰ্ধান, ইহাটো শুক্ৰাচাৰ্য্যেৰ সিদ্ধান্ত বলিয়া বৰ্ণিত হইয়াছে। মনু, মহাভাৰত প্ৰভৃতি প্ৰাচীন গ্ৰন্থে যে দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰেৰ স্ববিপুল আলোচনা প্ৰদৰ্শিত হইয়াছে, তাহাবই দুই একাৰ্টি কথা আমবা এই প্ৰবন্ধে আলোচনা কৰিব।

মহাভাৰতেৰ বাজৰ্ম্মপৰ্ব্বৰ অন্তৰ্গত সূত্ৰাধ্যায়ে দেখিতে পাওযা যায়—প্ৰজাস্থিৰ সঙ্ঘে সঙ্ঘে বাজৰ্ম্ম প্ৰবৰ্ত্তিত হয় নাই। ধাৰ্ম্মিক প্ৰজাগনুহ ব্যক্তিগত প্ৰবল ধাৰ্ম্মিক প্ৰবৃতিৰ দ্বাৰাই পৰস্পৰেৰ বৰ্ণকাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিতেন। বাহা, বাহ্য, দণ্ড ও দণ্ডন ব্যতীতই প্ৰজাপুঞ্জ প্ৰবল স্ব স্ব বৰ্ম্মপ্ৰবৃতিৰ দ্বাৰা পৰস্পৰ পৰস্পৰেৰ বৰ্ণা এবং পৰিপালন কৰিতেন। কিছু দিন এই ভাবে অতীত হওয়াৰ পৰে, প্ৰজাপুঞ্জেৰ চিত্ত বলুপিত হইয়াছিল। ক্ৰমশঃ লোভ, বাস, নাগ প্ৰভৃতিৰ দ্বাৰা জনতা অতিশয় বিক্ষুব্ধ হইয়াছিল। এইভাবে নবলোভ বিপ্লুত হইলে যোনতৰ বিপ্লব মনুষ্যগণাজে আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰিয়াছিল, তাহাতে দেবলোভও ভয়গ্ৰস্ত হইয়াছিলেন। ভয়গ্ৰস্ত দেবগণেৰ প্ৰাৰ্থনানুসাৰে সৰ্ব্বলোকেৰ বল্যাগেৰ জন্য ভগবান্ ব্ৰহ্মা এক লক্ষ অব্যায়যুক্ত একাৰ্টি অতি স্ববিপুল শাস্ত্ৰ স্বীয় বুদ্ধি-প্ৰভাবে নিৰ্ম্মাণ কৰিয়াছিলেন। ইহাতে বৰ্ম্ম অৰ্থ প্ৰভৃতি চতুৰ্বৰ্গ বিশদভাবে বৰ্ণিত হইয়াছিল। এই শাস্ত্ৰে স্থান বৃদ্ধি ক্ষয় দণ্ড এই ত্ৰিৰ্গ, আত্ম দেশ কাল উপায় কৃত্য ও সহায় এই নীতিত্ৰ যদ্ৰ্গ, ত্ৰয়ী আনুীক্ষিকী বাৰ্ত্তা ও স্ববিপুল দণ্ডনীতি এই চতুৰ্বিধ বিদ্যা প্ৰদৰ্শিত হইয়াছিল। এই শাস্ত্ৰে অমাত্যবৰ্ণা, প্ৰণিবি, চাৰ, প্ৰণিবেষ, সাম, দান, ভেদ, দণ্ড ও উপেক্ষা, মন্ত্ৰণা, সন্নি প্ৰভৃতি অগণ্য বিষয় বৰ্ণিত হইয়াছিল। এই শাস্ত্ৰে বৰ্ণ, হস্তী, অশ্ব, পদাতি, বিষ্টি, নৌকা, চৰ ও দেশিৰ এই অষ্টাঙ্গ বল নিকপিত হইয়াছিল। এই গ্ৰন্থে বিবিধ ব্যুহ, বিচিত্ৰ যুদ্ধকৌশল, স্নযুদ্ধ, স্নপলায়ন প্ৰভৃতি বৰ্ণিত হইয়াছিল। ব্ৰহ্মা-প্ৰণীত শাস্ত্ৰ পৈতামহতম্ব নামে প্ৰখ্যাতি লাভ কৰিয়াছিল। এব' লক্ষ অব্যায়যুক্ত বিৰাট্ গ্ৰন্থেৰ বল্লনাও আমবা কবিতে পাবি না। এই গ্ৰন্থেৰ প্ৰতিপাদ্য বিষয়গুলি অতি সংক্ষেপে মহাভাৰতেৰ বাজৰ্ম্মপৰ্ব্বৰ অন্তৰ্গত সূত্ৰাধ্যায়ে বৰ্ণিত হইয়াছে। আমাদেৰ দেশে এই সকল বিষয়েৰ আলোচনা তিবোহিত হওয়ায় মহাভাৰতেৰ প্ৰাচীন টীকাকাৰ দেববোধ, বঙ্গগৰ্ভ ও আনন্দপূৰ্ণ প্ৰভৃতি মনীষী এই সকল বিষয়েৰ প্ৰতি বিশেষ আলোকপাত কবিতে পাবেন নাই। এবং মহাভাৰতেৰ নবীন টীকাকাৰ অৰ্জুনমিশ্ৰ, নীলকণ্ঠ প্ৰভৃতিও সমস্ত শব্দেৰ প্ৰতিশব্দ পৰ্য্যন্ত দিতে পাবেন নাই। যে প্ৰতিশব্দ দেওয়া হইয়াছে, তাহাও অতি অসম্পূৰ্ণ। যেমন—অষ্টাঙ্গ বলেৰ অন্তৰ্গত “বিষ্টি” শব্দেৰ অৰ্থ নিৰ্দ্দেশ কবিতে যাইবা নীলকণ্ঠ বলিয়াছেন—“গৃহীতভাববাহক”। কোটিল্যেৰ অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰে বিষ্টিগণেৰ কৰ্ম্ম নিম্নলিখিতৰূপে নিৰ্দ্দিষ্ট হইয়াছে—“সেনানিবাস নিৰ্ম্মাণ, সেতু, কূপ, জলাশয়শোধন, যুদ্ধেৰ যন্ত্ৰ, আয়ুধ, বৰ্ম্ম, উপকৰণ, হস্তী, অশ্ব ও মনুষ্যাদিৰ আহাৰ্য্য বহন, যুদ্ধে ভগ্ন প্ৰহৰণাদিৰ অপনয়ন ও যুদ্ধে-আহত সৈনিকগণেৰ অপসারণ।” (৩৭১ পৃঃ, শ্যামশাস্ত্ৰিগুদ্ৰিত।) বৰ্ত্তমান সময়ে যুদ্ধে

বেঙ্ক্ৰস সোলাইটি যে কাজ বৰিয়া থাকে, তাহাও পূৰ্বকালে বিষ্টি বৰ্ণন অন্তৰ্গত ছিল। নীলকণ্ঠেন ব্যাখ্যাৰ সহিত কোটিল্যেৰ ব্যাখ্যাৰ তুলনা বৰিলে বুঝিতে পাবা যাউবে যে এই শাস্ত্র-সম্বন্ধে আশাদেন জ্ঞান কিভাবে হ্ৰাস পাইযাছে। এই প্ৰবন্ধে এজাতীয় স্তম্ভিত আলোচনা সম্ভাবিত নহে, এজন্য দিগ্দ্ৰশ্ৰী নমাজ বৰিয়াই বিবৃত হইল। পৈতাশতত্ব অতি স্তম্ভিত বৰিয়া ভগবান্ মহাদেব বিশালাক্ষ শিব এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ দশ হাজাৰ অব্যাহা সংক্ষেপ বৰেন। সংক্ষিপ্ত শাস্ত্ৰ বিশালাক্ষত্ব নামে প্ৰসিদ্ধি লাভ কৰে। তাহাও অতি বিপুল বৰিয়া ভগবান ইন্দ্ৰ পাঁচ হাজাৰ অব্যাহা উহান সংক্ষেপ বৰেন। ইন্দ্ৰকৃত শাস্ত্ৰ বাহুদত্তক শাস্ত্ৰ নামে প্ৰসিদ্ধি লাভ বৰেন। কোটিল্য তাহান অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ বাহুদত্তীপুত্ৰ নামে ইন্দ্ৰকে নিৰ্দেশ কৰিয়াছেন। কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ বিশালাক্ষেন নামও পুনঃপুনঃ উল্লিখিত হইযাছে। অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰপ্ৰণেতা ভগবান্ মহাদেব বিশালাক্ষ নামে ও ইন্দ্ৰ বাহুদত্তীপুত্ৰ নামে প্ৰসিদ্ধি লাভ কৰিয়াছেন। এই বাহুদত্তকত্ব অতি বিস্তৃত বৰিয়া ভগবান্ বৃহস্পতি তিন হাজাৰ অব্যাহা উহাৰ সংক্ষেপ কৰেন। ইহাই বাৰ্হস্পত্য তত্ত্ব নামে প্ৰসিদ্ধ। আৰাৰ ভগবান্ শুক্ৰাচাৰ্য্য ঐ তত্ত্বকে এক হাজাৰ অব্যাহা সংক্ষেপ কৰেন। সেই শাস্ত্ৰ ঔশনস তত্ত্ব নামে প্ৰসিদ্ধি লাভ কৰিয়াছে। মহাভাৰতেৰ বাজধৰ্মপৰ্বৰ ৫৮ অব্যাহা বলা হইযাছে যে—এই বাজধৰ্মেৰ প্ৰণেতা বৃহস্পতি, বিশালাক্ষ, ভগবান্ কাব্য (শুক্ৰ), মহাত্মা মহেন্দ্ৰ, প্ৰাচ্যতশ নমু, ভবদ্বাজ ও ভগবান্ গৌৰশিবা নুনি। কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰে গৌৰশিবা নুনিৰ নাম ব্যতীত আন সবলেন নামেনই উল্লেখ পাওয়া যায়। মহাভাৰতেৰ সভাপৰ্বৰ মহাবাজ যুৰিষ্ঠিবেৰ সভাতে সমাগত মহামিগাৰ্হণ নৰ্য্য গৌৰশিবা নুনিৰ নাম উল্লিখিত হইযাছে। এইকপ মহাভাৰতেৰ সভাপৰ্বৰ নাবদ-যুৰিষ্ঠিৰ-সংবাদে দেবৰ্ষি নাবদ মহাবাজ যুৰিষ্ঠিবেৰ নিকটে যে বাজধৰ্মেৰ স্তম্ভিত আলোচনা কৰিয়াছেন, তাহা সবলেনই বিশেষভাবে প্ৰণিধানযোগ্য। সভাপৰ্বৰ এই অধ্যায়েৰ অনুকপ কথাগুলি বাৰাঘণেও চিত্ৰকূটে ভবতমিলন প্ৰসঙ্গে ভগবান্ বাৰচত্ৰ ভবতেৰ নিকটে বৰিয়াছিলেন। বাজধৰ্ম বা দণ্ডনীতিৰ মূল সূত্ৰগুলি বাজৰ্ষি বাৰচত্ৰ ভবতেৰ নিকটে ও দেবৰ্ষি নাবদ যুৰিষ্ঠিবেৰ নিকটে বিবৃত কৰিয়াছিলেন। মহাভাৰতেৰ আপদধৰ্মপৰ্বৰ “ভাবদ্বাজ শত্ৰুজয়-সংবাদে” ভগবান্ ভাবদ্বাজ বাজা শত্ৰুজয়েৰ নিকটে অতি কুট বাজধৰ্ম বিবৃত কৰিয়াছেন। এই অধ্যায়েৰ অনুকপ কথাগুলি মহাভাৰতেৰ আদিপৰ্বৰ ১৪০ অব্যাহা “কণিকনীতি” নামে অতি কুট বাজধৰ্ম মহাবাজ বৃতবাষ্ট্ৰেৰ নিকটে তনুস্ত্ৰী দ্বিজোত্তম কণিক বৰ্ণনা কৰিয়াছেন। এই উপদেশেৰ ফলেই বৃতবাষ্ট্ৰ জতুগৃহদাহেৰ আয়োজন কৰিয়াছিলেন। এইকপ মহাভাৰতেৰ বাজধৰ্মপৰ্বৰ “কালকব্ৰক্ষী” নামক ঋষি ক্ষেত্ৰদৰ্শী বাজাৰ নিকটে বাজধৰ্ম বৰ্ণনা কৰিয়াছিলেন। মহাভাৰত গ্ৰন্থখানি অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ আকৰ। ভগবান্ ব্যাসদেবই “অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰমিদং প্ৰোক্তম্” বৰিয়া মহাভাৰতেৰ নিৰ্দেশ কৰিয়াছেন। এই মহাভাৰতেৰ বাজধৰ্মপৰ্বৰ যুদ্ধ-ঋণ, দণ্ডমুক্তিকা-নীতি (যাহা বৰ্ত্তমান সময়ে আমবা শুনিয়া থাকি), পঞ্চমবাহিনী প্ৰভৃতি কূটনীতি বিশদৰূপে আলোচিত হইযাছে। কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ আলোচনা কৰিলে বুঝিতে পাবা যায়, অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰণেতা আচাৰ্য্যগণ বহু বিষয়েই পৰস্পৰ-বিকল্প মতেৰ পোষণ কৰিতেন। সমস্ত বিষয়েই সমস্ত আচাৰ্য্য একবাক্য ছিলেন না। কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ যে কোন একটি অধ্যায় আলোচনা কৰিলেই ইহা স্পষ্টভাবে বুঝিতে পাবা যায়। অমাত্যোৎপত্তি-প্ৰকৰণে, সহাধ্যায়ী অমাত্য হওয়া উচিত ইহা ভাবদ্বাজ বৰিয়াছেন। সমানশীলব্যাসন ব্যক্তি অমাত্য হওয়া উচিত ইহা বিশালাক্ষ বৰিয়াছেন। পৰাশৰ ঐ উভয় মতই প্ৰত্যাহাৰ কৰিয়া পূৰ্বদৃষ্টানুবাগ ব্যক্তিকেই অমাত্য কৰা উচিত ইহা বৰিয়াছেন। পিণ্ডন ঐ মত প্ৰত্যাহাৰ কৰিয়া কৰ্ম্মবিশেষে পৰীক্ষিত ব্যক্তিকে অমাত্য কৰা উচিত বৰিয়াছেন। নীতিশাস্ত্ৰে দেবৰ্ষি নাবদই “পিণ্ডন” নামে অভিহিত হইযাছেন। কোনপদও ঐ মতও প্ৰত্যাহাৰ কৰিয়া বৰিয়াছেন—পিতৃপিতামহ-পৰস্পৰাক্ৰমে যে বংশীয়েবা অমাত্য হন, তাহাদিগকেই অমাত্য কৰা

উচিত। নীতিশাস্ত্ৰে ভীষ্মই ‘কোনপদগু’ নামে অভিহিত হইয়াছেন। বাতব্যাধি এই মতও প্ৰত্যাখ্যান কৰিয়া বলিয়াছেন—“নীতিবিৎ নূতন ব্যক্তিকে অমাত্য কৰা উচিত। নীতিশাস্ত্ৰে দ্বাবকা সাম্ৰাজ্যেৰ প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী উদ্ধব “বাতব্যাধি” নামে অভিহিত হইয়াছেন। বাহুদন্তীপুত্ৰ এই মতও প্ৰত্যাখ্যানপূৰ্বক বলিয়াছেন—“সদ্বংশীয় বিদ্বান্, শৌচ-শৌৰ্য্য ও অনুবাগযুক্ত ব্যক্তিকে অমাত্য কৰা উচিত। কোটিল্য বলিয়াছেন যে পূৰ্ব্বাচাৰ্য্যগণেৰ সমস্ত সিদ্ধান্তই সঙ্গত। তাঁহাৰা যাহাদিগকে অমাত্য বলিয়া নিৰ্দেশ কৰিয়াছেন, তাহাৰা সকলেই বিশেষ বিশেষ বিষয়ে অমাত্য হইতে পাবেন। কিন্তু তাঁহাৰা কেহই প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী হইবাব যোগ্য নহেন। এইকপে কোটিল্য অৰ্থ-শাস্ত্ৰ আলোচনা কৰিলে বুঝিতে পাবা যায়—দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰণেতা আচাৰ্য্যগণেৰ বহু মতভেদ ছিল।

এই বাজধৰ্ম বা দণ্ডনীতি-সম্বন্ধে মহাভাৰতে বলা হইয়াছে যে—সমস্ত ধৰ্ম ও উপধৰ্ম বাজধৰ্মেৰ অন্তৰ্গত ইহাই বেদেৰ সিদ্ধান্ত। যেমন হস্তিপদচিহ্নে সমস্ত প্ৰাণীৰ পদচিহ্ন বিলীন হইয়া থাকে, সেইকপ বাজধৰ্মে সমস্ত ধৰ্মই বিলীন হইয়া আছে। সমস্ত ধৰ্মই বাজধৰ্মপ্ৰধান, যেহেতু সমস্ত বণ ই বাজাব দ্বাৰা প্ৰতিপালিত হইয়া থাকে। এই দণ্ডনীতি বিনষ্ট হইলে বেদ বিলুপ্ত হইবে, সমস্ত ধৰ্ম ক্ষীণ হইবে, সমস্ত ধৰ্ম ও সমস্ত আশ্ৰম বিনষ্ট হইবে, ইত্যাদি (বাজধৰ্ম, ৬৩ অধ্যায়)।

মনুসংহিতাতেও মহাভাৰতেৰ কথাগুলিবই অনুকপ কথা বলা হইয়াছে (মনুসংহিতা, সপ্তম অধ্যায়, ১৪-২৪ শ্লোক)।

মহাভাৰতে বাজধৰ্মপৰ্বৰ প্ৰাৰম্ভে মহাবাজ যুধিষ্ঠিৰ বৰ্মজিজ্ঞাসু হইয়া ভীষ্মেৰ নিকটে প্ৰথমতঃ বাজধৰ্মেৰ কথাই জিজ্ঞাসা কৰিয়াছিলেন, “বাজধৰ্মান্ বিশেষণে কথ্যস্ব পিতামহ।” জিজ্ঞাসু যুধিষ্ঠিৰ ভীষ্মকে বলিয়াছিলেন “সমস্ত জীৱলোকেৰ বাজধৰ্মই আশ্ৰয়, বাজধৰ্ম ব্যতিৰেকে পশু পক্ষী বৃক্ষতৃণগুল্মাদিও থাকিতে পাবে না, পশুক্ৰেশ-নিবাবণও বাজধৰ্ম স্থিত না থাকিলে সম্ভাৱিত নহে। ধৰ্ম অৰ্থ কাম মোক্ষ এই চতুৰ্বৰ্গই দণ্ডনীতিতে আশ্ৰিত। যেমন লাগাম অশ্বকে এবং অন্ধুশ হস্তীকে নিয়ন্ত্ৰিত কৰে এইকপ বাজধৰ্ম সমস্ত জীৱলোকে নিয়ন্ত্ৰিত কৰিয়া থাকে। এই দণ্ডনীতি বিলুপ্ত হইলে, সমস্ত লোকমৰ্য্যাদা বিনষ্ট হইয়া যায়, সমস্ত লোক ব্যাকুল হইয়া যায়। সূৰ্য্য উদিত হইয়া যেমন অশুভ অক্ৰকাৰেৰ নাশ কৰিয়া থাকেন, সেইকপ বাজধৰ্ম লোকেৰ সমস্ত অশুভ গতিৰ নিবাবণ কৰিয়া থাকে (মহাভাৰত, বাজধৰ্মপৰ্ব, ৫৬ অধ্যায়)।

মহাবাজ যুধিষ্ঠিৰেৰ প্ৰশ্নেৰ উত্তৰে ভীষ্ম বলিয়াছিলেন, পিতাব গৃহে পুত্ৰগণেৰ মত যে বাজাব বাজে প্ৰজাপুঞ্জ নিৰ্ভয়ে বিচৰণ কৰে সেই বাজা বাজসত্তম। যে বাজেৰ প্ৰজা স্ব স্ব বিভব গোপন না কৰিয়া বাজে বাস কৰে, যে বাটেৰ প্ৰজা ন্যাপনকৰিৎ, যে বাটেৰ প্ৰজা স্ব স্ব কৰ্মনিবত, যে বাজেৰ প্ৰজা সজ্ঞাতনিবত নহে অৰ্থাৎ পৃথক্ দল গঠনে অভিলাষী নহে, পৰস্পৰ সঙ্ঘৰ্ষশীল নহে, যে বাজেৰ প্ৰজা বাজবশ্য, দানকচি, কুট-কপট-নাযা-নাংসৰ্য্য-বিবৰ্জিত, সেই বাজেৰ বাজাই বাজসত্তম (বাজধৰ্মপৰ্ব, ৫৭ অধ্যায়)।

বাজবৰ্ত্তক পৰিপালিত প্ৰজাবৃন্দ গৃহদ্বাৰ উন্মুক্ত কৰিয়া নিৰ্ভয়ে স্তম্ভে নিদ্রিত হইয়া থাকে, স্ত্ৰীলোকেৰাও সৰ্ববিধ অলঙ্কাৰে বিভূষিত হইয়া পুৰুষ গড়ে না লইয়াও নিৰ্ভয়ে পথে বিচৰণ কৰিয়া থাকে। বাজাব ভয়েই প্ৰজাপুঞ্জ পৰস্পৰেৰে ভয় পৰে না, যে কোনও বিষয়ে প্ৰজাব স্বেচ্ছা বাজশক্তিৰ উপৰেই নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে। বাজশক্তি স্থিত না থাকিলে সমস্ত স্বত্বই বিলুপ্ত হইয়া যায়, বাটে নাংস্যান্যায় প্ৰবৰ্ত্তিত হয়, সমস্ত লোক দস্যুগাং হইয়া যায়। বাজশক্তি ব্যৱহৃত না থাকিলে প্ৰজাপুঞ্জ যোৰ নবকে নিপতিত হয়, কৃষি, পাণ্ডপাল্য, বণিক পথ, বৈদিক ধৰ্ম সমস্তই বিলুপ্ত হইয়া যায়। বিবাহ, সনাতন, উৎসৱ বিলুপ্ত হয়, যোৰ দুৰ্ভিক্ষ দ্বাৰা বাট্ট বিনাশপ্ৰাপ্ত হয় (বাজধৰ্মপৰ্ব, ৬৮ অধ্যায়)।

মহাভাবতে প্রাচ্যেতস মনু বাজধৰ্ম্মেৰ প্ৰণেতা এই কথা বলা হইয়াছে। আনৰা যে মহৰ্ষি ভৃগু-প্ৰোক্ত মানবধৰ্ম্মশাস্ত্ৰ পাই তাহা স্বায়ত্ত্বৰ মনুৰ দ্বাৰা উপদিষ্ট। কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰে যে মানব অৰ্থ-শাস্ত্ৰেৰ সিদ্ধান্ত প্ৰদৰ্শিত হইয়াছে তাহা প্ৰসিদ্ধ মনুসংহিতাতে পাওয়া যায় না, অন্যদপ সিদ্ধান্তই পাওয়া যায়, তাহাতে মনে হয় কোটিল্য প্ৰাচ্যেতস মনুৰ দণ্ডনীতি হইতেই এসব সিদ্ধান্ত গ্ৰহণ কৰিয়াছিলেন। বিদ্যা-সমুদ্দেশ্য প্ৰকৰণে কোটিল্য ত্ৰয়ী, বার্তা ও দণ্ডনীতি ভেদে বিদ্যা ত্ৰিবিধ ইহাই মানব সিদ্ধান্ত বলিয়া উল্লেখ কৰিয়াছেন—আনুীক্ষিকী পৃথক্ বিদ্যা নহে, ইহা ত্ৰয়ী বিদ্যাবই অন্তৰ্গত, এইদপ বলা হইয়াছে, কিন্তু মনুসংহিতাতে আনুীক্ষিকী, ত্ৰয়ী, বার্তা ও দণ্ডনীতি ভেদে বিদ্যা চতুৰ্বিধ, এই দপ বলা হইয়াছে। প্ৰচলিত মনুসংহিতাতে মুখ্যভাবে দণ্ডনীতি বলা হয় নাই। যাহাও বলা হইয়াছে টীকাকাবগণ তাহাতেও বিশেষ কোনও আলোকপাত কৰিতে পাবেন নাই। ইহাৰ মুখ্য কাৰণ এই যে টীকাকাবগণেৰ সময়ে বাৰ্দ্ধীৰ্য্য ব্যৱস্থা তাঁহাদেৰ আৱন্তই ছিল না, অপ্ৰগোজনীয় বিষয়ে কাহাবও উৎসাহ থাকিতে পাবে না। দায়বিভাগ প্ৰভৃতি আৱন্ত বিষয়ে টীকাকাবগণ যথেষ্ট আলোচনা কৰিয়া-ছেন, মনুসংহিতাৰ বাজধৰ্ম্ম-প্ৰকৰণেৰ প্ৰায় সমস্ত কথাই মহাভাবতে বিস্তৃতভাবে আলোচিত হইয়াছে কিন্তু টীকাকাবগণ তাহাৰ উল্লেখও কৰেন নাই। কিন্তু দায়বিভাগ, প্ৰায়শ্চিত্ত, অশৌচ প্ৰভৃতিৰ নিকপণে তাঁহাৰা বহু গ্ৰন্থেৰ সংবাদ দিয়াছেন। বাৰ্দ্ধে বৰ-ব্যৱস্থা-সম্বন্ধে মনুসংহিতাৰ ৭ম অধ্যায়ে ১২৯ শ্লোকে অতি সঙ্ক্ষেপে যে কথা বলা হইয়াছে তাহা অতি বিস্তৃত ও হৃদয়গ্ৰাহী কৰিয়া মহাভাবতে বাজধৰ্ম্মপৰ্বে ৮৭ অব্যায়ে ও ৮৮ অধ্যায়ে বলা হইয়াছে, বহু শ্লোকও মনুসংহিতা ও মহাভাবতে সম্পূৰ্ণ অভিন্ন। অথচ এই উভয় গ্ৰন্থেৰ টীকাকাবগণ কেহই অপৰ গ্ৰন্থেৰ সংবাদ উল্লেখ কৰেন নাই। অথচ যে সমস্ত বিষয় টীকাকাবগণেৰ সময়ে তাঁহাদেৰ আৱন্ত ছিল তাহা গ্ৰন্থাত্তৰ-সংবাদ দ্বাৰা বিশেষভাবে বিবৃত কৰিয়াছেন। ইহা টীকাকাবগণেৰ দোষ নহে, দেশেৰ অবস্থাই তাহাৰ মূল কাৰণ। অন্যতৰ বিষয়ে কাহাবও উৎসাহ হইতে পাবে না। একটু নিবিষ্ট হইয়া টীকা-গ্ৰন্থ পাঠ কৰিলে টীকাকাবগণেৰ সময়ে প্ৰচলিত দেশেৰ পৰিস্থিতিৰ প্ৰভাৱ তাঁহাদেৰ টীকাগ্ৰন্থে বহুল পৰিমাণে উপলব্ধ হইবে। যাঁহাৰা হিন্দু সাম্ৰাজ্য দেখেন নাই তাঁহাৰা তাহাৰ কল্পনাও কৰিতে পাবেন না। এজন্য স্প্ৰাচীন গ্ৰন্থেৰ আলোচনা ব্যতীত নবীন গ্ৰন্থেৰ আলোচনা দ্বাৰা প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতেৰ বাৰ্দ্ধীৰ্য্য ব্যৱস্থা দেখা সম্পূৰ্ণ অসম্ভৱ। আগাব মনে হয় কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰই প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতেৰ বাৰ্দ্ধীৰ্য্য ব্যৱস্থা প্ৰদৰ্শক অন্তিম গ্ৰন্থ। এই গ্ৰন্থেৰ পৰে অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ-সম্বন্ধে এইদপ পূৰ্ণাঙ্গ গ্ৰন্থ আৰ লিখিত হয় নাই। কামন্দক প্ৰভৃতি আচাৰ্য্য এই কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰই অংশ-বিশেষেৰ সংক্ষেপমাত্ৰ কৰিয়াছেন।

অত্যন্ত খেদেৰ ও বিস্ময়েৰ বিষয় এই যে কোটিল্য-প্ৰণীত অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ অতি প্ৰাচীন হইলেও এই গ্ৰন্থেৰ ভাষা টীকা ব্যাখ্যা প্ৰভৃতি অতি অল্পই বৰ্চিত হইয়াছিল। এই গ্ৰন্থেৰ ভট্টস্বামী-প্ৰণীত প্ৰতিপদপঞ্জিকা নামক একখানি টীকা পাওয়া যায়, তাহাও অসম্পূৰ্ণ, কিয়দংশ মাত্ৰ পাওয়া যায়। আৰ ২।১ খানি টীকা পাওয়া যায় বটে, তাহা নবীন। যাঁহাৰা হিন্দু সাম্ৰাজ্য দেখেন নাই তাঁহাদেৰ পক্ষে এই গ্ৰন্থেৰ যথার্থ ব্যাখ্যা কৰা সম্পূৰ্ণ অসম্ভৱ। ভাৰতবৰ্ষে এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনা সূদীৰ্ঘ দিন হইতে বিলুপ্ত হওয়ায় কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ ব্যাখ্যা প্ৰভৃতি বৰ্চিত হইতে পাবে নাই।

কোটিল্য তাঁহাৰ অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰাৰম্ভেই বলিয়াছেন, “পৃথিবীৰ লাভ ও পালনেৰ জন্য পূৰ্ব্বা-চাৰ্য্যগণ যে সমস্ত অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ প্ৰণয়ন কৰিয়াছিলেন সেই সমস্ত অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ অবলম্বন কৰিয়াই এই অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ প্ৰণীত হইল।” ইহাতে স্পষ্টই বুঝিতে পাৰা যায় যে কোটিল্যেৰ সময়ে পূৰ্ব্বাচাৰ্য্যগণেৰ বৰ্চিত অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰগুলি বিদ্যমান ছিল, এবং তিনি বিভিন্ন বিষয়ে পূৰ্ব্বাচাৰ্য্যগণেৰ পৃথক্ পৃথক্ মতগুলিৰ পুনঃপুনঃ উল্লেখ কৰায় স্পষ্টভাবেই বুঝিতে পাৰা যায় যে প্ৰাচীন অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰগুলি তাঁহাৰ সময়ে বিদ্যমান

ছিল।^১ ফল কথা, যখন হিন্দু সাম্রাজ্য ছিল তখন এই গ্ৰন্থগুলিৰ আৱশ্যকতা ছিল, অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰও বিদ্যা বলিয়া পৰিগণিত হইত, শ্ৰেষ্ঠতম বিদ্যা বলিয়া পৰিগণিত হইত। প্ৰয়োজনেৰে অবসান হইয়াছে শাস্ত্ৰও লুপ্ত হইয়াছে, স্মৃতিও এই শাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনাও উচ্চিহ্ন হইয়াছে। সম্ৰাট চন্দ্ৰগুপ্তেৰ সাম্ৰাজ্য পালনেৰে জন্য এই অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰখানি প্ৰণীত হইয়াছিল এই অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ সাহায্যেই সম্ৰাট অশোকৰে সুবিশাল সাম্ৰাজ্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত হইয়াছিল। মহাভাৰত আলোচনা কৰিলে দেখা যায় যঁহাবা ব্ৰহ্মবিদ্যাৰ ঋষি তাঁহাবাই অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰও প্ৰবক্তা, অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰবচন দ্বাৰা ব্ৰহ্মবিদ্যা মলিন হয় নাই। বৃহস্পতি, শুক্ৰ, নাৰদ, উত্থা, বামদেব, ভবদ্বাজ প্ৰভৃতি মহৰ্ষিই এইকপ নীতিশাস্ত্ৰেৰ প্ৰবক্তা বলিয়া মহাভাৰতে কীৰ্তিত হইয়াছেন। সম্ৰাট অশোকৰে সময় হইতে কতকগুলি অতি অদূৰদৰ্শী লোকেৰে এইকপ ধাৰণা জন্মিয়াছিল যে দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্ৰেৰ আলোচনাৰ মানুষেৰ শ্ৰেয়ঃ পথ চিহ্নিকল্প হইয়া যায়, এই ধাৰণাৰ বশবৰ্ত্তী হইয়া ভাৰতীয় জনতা এই শাস্ত্ৰে ক্ৰমশঃ হতাদব হইয়া পড়িয়াছিল। ইহাৰ ফলে যে কেবল অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰগুলিই বিনুপ্ত হইয়াছিল তাহা নহে, ভাৰত-সাম্ৰাজ্যও এই অদূৰদৰ্শীদিগেৰে হস্ত হইতে চিৰবিচ্যুত হইয়াছিল। সুদীৰ্ঘ দিন হইতেই, কেবলমাত্ৰ এই বৈৰাগ্য মোক্ষ প্ৰভৃতিৰ বাচনিক আলোচনা সুপ্ৰসাৰিত হইয়া মোক্ষশাস্ত্ৰই একমাত্ৰ শাস্ত্ৰ বলিয়া সুপ্ৰচাৰিত হইয়াছিল, আৰু তাহাৰ বিৰূপ পৰিণতিৰ আশ্বাদও গৃহীত হইয়াছে।

প্ৰজামণ্ডলীৰ প্ৰতি বাজাৰ কৰ্ত্তব্য

মহাভাৰতেৰ সভাপৰ্বৰে নাৰদ-প্ৰশ্নে বলা হইয়াছে—বাণ্টেৰ কৃষকগণ পৰিতুষ্ট থাকা উচিত, কৃষকগণেৰে গৃহে অন্তৰে অভাৱ ও বীজশস্যেৰ অভাৱ যাহাতে না হইতে পাবে তাহাৰ প্ৰতি বাজাৰ তীক্ষ্ণ দৃষ্টি থাকা আৱশ্যক। কৃষিক্ষেত্ৰে বৃহৎ বৃহৎ জলপূৰ্ণ তড়াগ প্ৰভৃতি যথাক্ৰমে গঢ়িবিষ্ট হওয়া উচিত। এই ভাবে তড়াগসমূহ বক্ষা কৰিতে হইবে যে যাহাতে কৃষি দেবমাতৃক না হইয়া পড়। বাৰিবৰ্ষণেৰ ফলেই যে ভূমিতে শস্য উৎপন্ন হয়, পৰ্যাপ্ত বৰ্ষা না হইলে যে ভূমিতে শস্য উৎপন্ন হয় না, সেই ভূমিকে দেবমাতৃক ভূমি কহে। সেই ভূমিতে যে কৃষি হয়, তাহাকে দেবমাতৃক কৃষি কহে। বাৰিবৰ্ষণেৰ অৱতা হইলে দেবমাতৃক ভূমিতে দুৰ্ভিক্ষ অবশ্যজ্ঞাবী। এই জন্য কৃষি যাহাতে দেবমাতৃক না হয়, কৰ্মকগণ বৃষ্টিৰ অপেক্ষাৰ বসিয়া না থাকে, বৃষ্টিৰ অভাবে কৃষিকাৰ্য্যেৰ ব্যাঘাত না ঘটে, তাহাৰ প্ৰতি বাজাৰ তীক্ষ্ণ দৃষ্টি ৰাখা আৱশ্যক। বৰ্ত্তমান সময়ে ইহাকেই সেচ-বিভাগেৰে কৰ্ম বলা হয়। আৰু বলা হইয়াছে যে কৃষকগণকে কৃষি-ঋণ প্ৰদান কৰিবাব ব্যৱস্থা থাকা আৱশ্যক এই ঋণকে অনুগ্ৰহ-ঋণ বলা হইয়া থাকে। নামমাত্ৰ স্ৰুদে এই অনুগ্ৰহ-ঋণেৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা বাজাৰ কৰ্ত্তব্য।*

পুৰবাসী ও জনপদবাসী প্ৰজাবৃন্দ শত্ৰুপক্ষীয় বাজগণেৰে নিকট হইতে অৰ্থাদি গ্ৰহণ পূৰ্বক শত্ৰুপক্ষেৰে অনুকূল হইয়া সজ্জবদ্ধ ভাবে যাহাতে বাজাৰ বিৰোধ কৰিতে না পাবে, বাজাৰ সেইদিবে তীক্ষ্ণ দৃষ্টি ৰাখা আৱশ্যক।†

* কচিচৎ তুষ্টাঃ কৃষীবলাঃ ৷৭৬৷ কচিচদ্ৰাষ্ট্ৰে তড়াগানি পূৰ্ণানি চ বৃহন্তি চ। ভাগশো বিনিবিষ্টানি ন কৃষিদেব-মাতৃকা ৷৭৭৷ কচিচনু ভজং বীজঞ্চ কৰ্মকস্যাবগীদতি। প্ৰত্যেকঞ্চ শতং বৃদ্ধ্যা দদাম্যগমনুগ্ৰহম্ ৷৭৮৷

মহাভাৰত, সভাপৰ্ব, ৫ম অধ্যায়।

† কচিচৎ পৌৰা ন সহিতা যে চ তে রাষ্ট্ৰবাসিনঃ। যযা সহ বিক্ৰম্যন্তে পঠৈঃ ক্ৰীতাঃ কথঞ্চন ৷৯৩৷

সর্বপ্রকার শিল্পীৰ শিল্প উৎপাদনেৰ জন্য তাহাদেৰ অপেক্ষিত দ্রব্য ও উপকৰণ অন্ততঃ চাৰি মাস চলাব উপযুক্তভাবে সৰ্ব্বদা শিল্পিগণেৰ গৃহে যাহাতে সক্ষিত থাকে, সেদিকে বাজাৰ তীক্ষ্ণ দৃষ্টি থাকা আবশ্যিক।^১

অর্থলাভেৰ জন্য দূৰদেশ হইতে সনাগত বণিক্গণেৰ নিকট হইতে যথানিয়মে শুদ্ধ গ্রহণেৰ ব্যবস্থা বাখা বাজাৰ কৰ্তব্য। এই বিষয় কোটিল্য অর্থশাস্ত্ৰেৰ শুদ্ধাধ্যক্ষ-প্ৰবৰণে অতি বিশদভাবে বৰ্ণিত হইয়াছে।

অগ্নিভয় বোগভয় প্রভৃতি হইতে বাজা সৰ্বদা স্বীয় বাট্ট বক্ষা কৰিবেন। অন্ধ, মূক, পঙ্গু, বিকলাঙ্গ ও অনাথ ব্যক্তিগণকে বাজা পিতাৰ মত বক্ষা কৰিবেন এবং পবিত্ৰাজক সন্ন্যাসিগণকেও সেইৰূপ বক্ষা কৰিবেন।^২

কোটিল্য অর্থশাস্ত্ৰে অগ্নিভয়, জলপ্লাবন, ব্যাধি, দুৰ্ভিক্ষ ও মডক এই পাঁচ প্ৰকাৰ দৈব পীড়াৰ উল্লেখ কৰিয়া তাহাৰ প্ৰতিকাৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰা হইয়াছে (কোটিল্য, ব্যসনাবিকানিব-পীডনবৰ্গ)।

বাজাৰ বাজ্যাভিষেক বাট্টবাসী প্ৰজাগণেৰ অনুমতিগাপেক্ষ ছিল। প্ৰজাগণেৰ অসম্মতিতে বাজা বাজ্যে অভিষিক্ত হইতে পাবিতেন না, এই কথা মহাভাবতে পুনঃপুনঃ বলা হইয়াছে। কুকবংশীয় সম্ৰাট্ প্ৰতীপ তাঁহাৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ দেবাপিকে বাজ্যে অভিষিক্ত কৰিতে উদ্যত হইলে বাট্টবাসী প্ৰজা-পুঞ্জ দেবাগিব অভিষেকে আপত্তি কৰায় নিতাত দুঃখেৰ সহিত সম্ৰাট্ প্ৰতীপ তাঁহাৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰেৰ অভিষেক হইতে নিবৃত্ত হইয়াছিলেন, তাহাৰ ফলে প্ৰতীপেৰ কনিষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ শান্তনুই বাজ্যে অভিষিক্ত হইয়াছিলেন।

সম্ৰাট্ যযাতি তাঁহাৰ কনিষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ পুরুকে বাজ্য প্ৰদান কৰিতে উদ্যুক্ত হইলে প্ৰজাপুঞ্জ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ যদু বিদ্যমান থাকিতে কনিষ্ঠ পুত্ৰেৰ বাজ্যাভিষেকে সন্তত হয় নাই। এজন্য যযাতি বহু যুক্তি দ্বাৰা প্ৰজাগণেৰ সম্মতি লইয়া পুরুকে অভিষিক্ত কৰিয়াছিলেন (মহাভাবত, উদ্যোগপৰ্ব, ১৪৯ অধ্যায়)।

বানপ্ৰস্থ অবলম্বন কৰিবাৰ সময়ে মহাবাজ ধৃতবাহুকেও কুকবাহুেৰ চতুৰ্বৰ্ণ প্ৰজাৰ অনুমতি লইতে হইয়াছিল, মহাভাবতেৰ আশ্ৰমবাসিক-পৰ্ব্বেৰ ৮ম ও ৯ম অধ্যায় পাঠ কৰিলে প্ৰাচীন ভাবে বাজাৰ সহিত প্ৰজাগণেৰ সম্বন্ধ অতি সুস্পষ্টভাবে বুঝিতে পাবা যায়। মহাবাজ ধৃতবাহু কৃতাজলি হইয়া প্ৰজাগণেৰ নিকটে ক্ষমা প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিয়াছিলেন এবং বলিয়াছিলেন, আমি দীৰ্ঘ দিন আপনাদেৰ শুশ্ৰূষা কৰিয়াছি। তাহাতে আমাৰ যাহা অপবাধ হইয়াছে তাহাৰ জন্য আপনাবা আমাকে ক্ষমা ককন।^৩

মহাবাজ ধৃতবাহু আৰও বলিয়াছিলেন যে মহাবাহী গান্ধাবীও আমাৰ সহিত বনগমন কৰিতে অভিলাষিণী হইয়াছেন, তিনি আমাদ্বাৰা আপনাদেৰ নিকট বনগমনেৰ অনুমতি প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিতেছেন।^৪

* দ্ৰব্যোপকৰণং কিঞ্চিৎ সৰ্বদা সৰ্বশিল্পিনাম্। চাতুৰ্মাস্যাববং সম্যক্ নিযতং সম্ভ্রযচ্ছসি ॥১১৮॥

† কচিচদগ্নিভয়াচৈচব সৰ্বং ব্যালভযাতথা। বোগবক্ষোভয়াচৈচব বাট্টং স্বং পবিবক্ষসি ॥১২৩॥ কচিচদক্ষাংচ মুকাংচ পঙ্গুন ব্যাঙ্গানবাক্তবান্। পিতোৰ পাসি বর্ধন্তে। তথা পুত্ৰজিতানপি ॥১২৪॥ মহাভাবত, সভাপৰ্ব, ৭ম অধ্যায়।

‡ মযা চ ভবতাং সম্যক্ শুশ্ৰূষা য়া কৃতানযাঃ। অসম্যগ্ বা মহাভাগান্তং ক্ষন্তব্যমতজ্জিতৈঃ ॥৩॥

মযা বন্ধো'যমঞ্জলিঃ। এষো'ঞ্জলিবিদং নযাঃ। মহাভাবত, আশ্ৰমবাসিকপৰ্ব, ৯ম অধ্যায়।

§ ইযঞ্চ কৃপণা বৃদ্ধা হতপুত্ৰা তপস্বিনী। গান্ধাবী পুত্ৰশোকাত্তা যুয়ান্ যাচতি বৈ মযা ॥

মহাভাবত, আশ্ৰমবাসিকপৰ্ব, ৯ম অধ্যায়, ৯ম শ্লোক

মহাবাজ ধৃতবাঈ বনগমনে উদ্‌যুক্ত হইলে কুৰ্ব্বাজ্যেব চতুৰ্ণ প্রজাগণেব এক মহাসম্মেলন বাজধানী হস্তিনাতে আহুত হইয়াছিল। মহাবাজ ধৃতবাঈ নিজেই এই সম্মেলনেব আহ্বান কবিয়া- ছিলেন। প্রজাগণেব নিকট হইতে নিজেব বনগমনেব অনুমতি লইয়া পরে ধৃতবাঈ মহাবাজ যুধিষ্ঠিৰকে প্রজাগণেব ন্যাসৰূপে গচ্ছিত ও প্রজাগণকে মহাবাজ যুধিষ্ঠিৰেব নিকটে ন্যাসৰূপে গচ্ছিত কবিয়া ভাবতে বাজা ও প্রজাব সম্বন্ধ সমুজ্জ্বল কবিয়াছিলেন। প্রজা বাজাব ও বাজা প্রজাব বন্ধক, ইহাই মহাভাবতে “বনব্যাহ্ন ন্যায়” বলিয়া কীৰ্ত্তিত হইয়াছে। †

ভাবতীয় বাজনীতিশাস্ত্রেব একটা অসাধাবণ বৈশিষ্ট্য বাজাব শিক্ষা। বাজা কিকপ শিক্ষায় শিক্ষিত হইবেন ইহাব বিস্তৃত আলোচনা মনু মহাভাবত কোটিল্য প্রভৃতি শাস্ত্রে বিশদভাবে বর্ণিত হইয়াছে। অবিষড্‌বৰ্গ ত্যাগ কবিয়া বাজা ইন্দ্ৰিয় জয় কবিবেন। অজিতেন্দ্ৰিয় বাজাব বাজ্য স্থায়ী হয় না একথাও বহু উদাহৰণ দ্বাৰা কোটিল্য অৰ্থশাস্ত্রে বলিয়াছেন। মহাভাবত বাগাষণ প্রভৃতি ইহাবই সমুজ্জ্বল উদাহৰণ। কোটিল্য বলিয়াছেন, সম্পূৰ্ণ অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰই ইন্দ্ৰিয়জয়েব জন্য বলা হইয়াছে। †

ভাবতীয় দণ্ডনীতিশাস্ত্রেব আলোচ্য বিষয় অগণ্য, এই ক্ষুদ্র প্ৰবন্ধে তাহাব সঙ্ক্ষিপ্ত আলোচনাও সম্ভাবিত নহে, এজন্য আব একটিমাত্ৰ বিষয় বলিয়াই প্ৰবন্ধেব উপসংহাৰ কবিব। ভগবান্ মনু ৭ম অধ্যায়ে বাজাব কৰ্ত্তব্য-সম্বন্ধে একটা বিশেষ কথা বলিয়াছেন, তাহা এই যে নীতিজ্ঞ নবপতি সৰ্ব্ব-প্ৰযত্নে এইকপ ব্যবস্থা কবিবেন যে বাজাব মিত্ৰ, উদাসীন ও শত্ৰু-বাজ্য যেন কোনও মতেই তাহাব অপেক্ষা আধিক্য লাভ কবিতে না পাবে। এই ত্ৰিবিধ বাজ্যেব যে কোনটি আধিক্য লাভ কবিলেই তাহাব নিকটে বাজাকে বাধ্য হইয়া অবনত হইয়া পড়িতে হইবে।

মিত্ৰ উদাসীন ও শত্ৰু এই তিনটিব যে কোনটিই যেন বাজাকে বল ঐশ্বৰ্য্যাদি দ্বাৰা অতিক্ৰম কবিতে না পাবে, বাজা সৰ্ব্বপ্ৰযত্ন দ্বাৰা তাহাব ব্যবস্থা কবিবেন। ইহাই বাজধৰ্ম্মেব বা দণ্ডনীতিব সাৰ কথা। ‡

ভগবান্ মনুৰ এই সাৰবৎ উপদেশেব প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য না কবিয়াই হিন্দু সাম্ৰাজ্যেব পতন হইয়াছিল, এই উপদেশেব প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য বাঁখিলে কোনও সাম্ৰাজ্যেবই কখনও পতন হইব না।

সাব গুরুদাস

শ্ৰীযুক্ত ঢাকচন্দ্ৰ বিশ্বাস

ইংৰাজী Sir-এব উচ্চাৰণ বাংলায় লিখিতে হ'লে লিখিতে হয়—“স্যাব”, অনেক ভেবে- চিন্তে য (য) ফলাটা আগি তুলে দিযেছি গুরুদাসেব নামেব পূৰ্বে বাজদত্ত উপাধি “স্যাব” থেকে। সাবৰ নিযে সাব হ'বেই তিনি সংসাৰে এসেছিলেন বলে আগি মনে

* এষ ন্যাসো ময়া দত্তঃ সৰ্ব্বেষাং বো যুধিষ্ঠিৰঃ। ভবতো'স্য চ বীৰণ্য ন্যাসভূতাঃ কৃত্য ময়া ॥

মহা, আশ্রম, ৯ম অধ্যায়, ১৪শ শ্লোক।

† কৃৎস্নং হি শাস্ত্ৰমিদমিন্দ্ৰিয়জয়ঃ। কোটিল্য, ইন্দ্ৰিয়জয়-প্ৰকৰণ।

‡ সৰ্বোপায়েন্তথা কুৰ্য্যান্ নীতিজ্ঞঃ পৃথিবীপতিঃ। যথা'স্যাভ্যধিকা ন স্ত্যমিত্ৰোদাসীনশত্ৰবঃ ॥

যথেনং নাভিসদৃশ্যমিত্ৰোদাসীনশত্ৰবঃ। তথা সৰ্বং সংবিদধ্যাদেশ সামাসিকো নয়ঃ ॥

মনু, ৭ম, ১৭৭ ও ১৮০তম শ্লোক।

কবি। জন্মান্তৰ-বাদ-বিশ্বাসীৰ এটা মনে কৰা অসম্ভৱ নহ—সাব গুৰুদাস, বিধাতাৰ হাত কস্মে পৃথিৱীৰ আলো-বাতাস গায়ে লাগান নি, কায়েনী-গডনে ধাৰিকল্প হ'য়েই ভাঙ্গা নানিকেলভাঙ্গা মৃত্যুঞ্জয়ী প্ৰতিভা নিষে তিনি জন্ম পৰিগ্ৰহ ক'ৰেছিলেন। বাল্য-পনিবেশ গ'ড়ে ওঠে তাঁৰ স্বৰ্গাদপি গৰীয়সী কঠোৰ কৰ্তব্যপৰায়ণা স্নেহময়ী জননীৰ নিবমানুবৃত্তিতা-বেষ্টিত আফ্ৰিনায়—বদাচাৰ, অনাচাৰ, স্নেহাচাৰ, ধন-তন্দ্ৰেণ প্ৰভুৰ যেখানে প্ৰবেশ-পথ খুঁজ পায় নি ব্ৰাহ্মণ্য-ধৰ্মেৰ স্মৃতিত স্মৃশাসনে। বজাদপি কঠোৰ, কুসুমাদপি কোমল হৃদয়েৰ চিন্তা-ধাৰা ও ভাব-ধাৰাব জল-সেচন গুৰুদাস-বীজকে অঙ্কুৰিত, পল্লবিত ক'ৰে তুলতে লাগল যখন, তখন গুৰুদাস ছিলেন লোকচক্ষুৰ অন্তৰালে। মহাক্ৰমে যখন তিনি পৰিণত হ'লেন, মানুহ দেখল তখন 'চিৰ-সচেতন-মানবতাৰ প্ৰাণবন্ত গতিধৰ্ম'। দাবিদ্ৰোহ মহাশক্তি তখন ভগবানেন কৃপা-চিহ্নিত গুৰুদাসৰে প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত কৰেছে গৌৰবেৰ তুফ শৃঙ্গে। আচাৰ্য্য গুৰুদাস, ব্যবহাৰাজীৰ গুৰুদাস, ধৰ্ম্মাবিকৰণৰ গুৰুদাস, দল ও দেশেৰ সেৱাপৰায়ণ গুৰুদাস, নিষ্ঠাবান ও আচাৰবান গুৰুদাস, স্বৰ্গপৰায়ণ গুৰুদাস, আদৰ্শ পুত্ৰ—আদৰ্শ পিতা—আদৰ্শ স্বামী—আদৰ্শ বন্ধু—আদৰ্শ পৰহিতব্ৰতধৰ সত্যনিষ্ঠ সত্যব্ৰত সত্যবাক্ জিতেন্দ্ৰিয় প্ৰিয়ভাষী সদালাপী নিৰীক নবধাকুললক্ষণ-সম্পন্ন আদৰ্শ-চৰিত্ৰ গুৰুদাস, নীৰব ও সবৰ বিস্ময় উৎপাদন কৰল কুলীন-অকুলীন, অভিজাত-অনভিজাত সমাজে,—প্ৰণাম-নমস্কাৰ, অভিনন্দিত-অভিবন্দিত তাঁকে কবল সকলে নতশিৰ হ'য়ে।

যে বেদোজ্জ্বলা বুদ্ধিসম্পন্ন ত্যাগধৰ্ম্মী জাতিৰ কুটীৰদ্বাৰে ছত্ৰ-দণ্ড-চামৰ ভুলুপ্তিত হ'ত একদিন, সেই জাতিৰ শোণিতধাৰা প্ৰবহমাণ ছিল নাতিদীৰ্ঘ শীৰ্ষকায় সদানদচিত্ত-সদাপ্ৰফুল্লানন-বিৰাট-হৃদয় গুৰুদাসেৰ শিৰা-প্ৰশিৰায়। প্ৰাচ্য-প্ৰতীচ্যেৰ বিদ্যাবত্তা তাঁকে কপাষিত কৰেছে অলৌকিক কপে, চিৰ-সম্মানেৰ সিংহাসনে প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত কৰেছে মানবতাৰ ঐশ্বৰ্য্য দিয়ে। স্বপক্ষে তিনি ঘনিষ্ঠতাৰ নিবিড় বন্ধনে আবদ্ধ কব্তেন অনুৰাগেৰ অনুশাসনে, তৰ্কস্থলে প্ৰতিপক্ষকে পৰাজিত বশীভূত কব্তেন দ্বন্দ্বাতীত প্ৰেম-ধৰ্ম্মেৰ মহিমায। তাঁৰ সহজ-ধৰ্ম্ম, কৰ্ম্ম-প্ৰেৰণা ও অমানুষ-বীৰ্য্য তাঁকে ক'ৰে তুলেছিল অপৰাজেয়, প্ৰীতি-ভীতিৰ সন্মোহন-অস্ত্ৰে। কৰ্ম্ম-স্থলে, সমাজ-ৰাষ্ট্ৰনীতি-ক্ষেত্ৰে, ৰাজ-দৰবাৰে তাঁৰ আসন ছিল মনীষীৰ, সেই মনীষাই তাঁকে ক'ৰে বাঞ্ছে চিৰস্মৰণীয়। ঘৰে-বাইৰে তিনি কিন্তু বুঝিয়ে গেছেন—দাসত্বৰ ভিত্তিতে, দাস-মনোবৃত্তিতে স্বাধীনতাৰ সৌধ-নিৰ্ম্মাণেৰ কল্পনা শুধুই প্ৰহেলিকা নহ—অক্ষমাহ প্ৰমাদ। প্ৰমাদ অপনোদনেৰ জন্য অদ্ভুত ভঙ্গীতে তিনি বাণী দিয়েছেন—অযোগ্যতা, অক্ষমতা, দৌৰ্ব্বল্য ও স্তাবকতায় স্মৃতিবাদী দলেৰ অন্যান্য অনেক স্মৃতিধা হ'লেও হ'তে পাবে, কিন্তু স্বাধীনতা দুৰে থাক্, স্বাধীন-চিন্তাৰ বীজ উগ্ৰ হ'বে না এই মনস্তত্ত্ব বিশিষ্ট মানুহেৰ হৃদয়-ক্ষেত্ৰে। তাঁৰ দৃষ্টি ছিল মোহমুক্ত, ঐতিহ্য ছিল অভিজ্ঞতাৰ, অভিব্যক্তি ছিল অভূত-পূৰ্ব ব্যঞ্জনা ও প্ৰসাদগুণেৰ, বৈশিষ্ট্য ছিল লোকদুৰ্ভত। এই বৈশিষ্ট্যেৰ জন্যই আ-পামৰ সাধাৰণ তাঁকে প্ৰীতি-ভক্তি-শ্ৰদ্ধাৰ আসন দিয়েছিল অযাচিতভাবে।

ভক্ত-ভাবুৰ সাব গুৰুদাস, মানস-সবোৰেৰ একটী অপকপ কবিতাৰ কিয়দংশ প্ৰায়ই আবৃত্তি কব্তেন অবসৰ-কালে। কবিতাৰ ভাব ও ভাষা—

শুনিয়াছি লোকমুখে, একা যে পড়িয়া দুখে
তোমাৰ শবণ লয়, বন্ধু তুমি হও তা'ৰ,
তবে ত আমাৰ তুমি, একা আমি নহি আব।
একা আমি নহি আব, বন্ধু তুমি নাৰায়ণ,
তুমি যা'ৰ আপনাৰ, দুঃখ তা'ৰ উদ্‌যাপন।

ঈশ্বৰীয়া কথাৰ তিনি লাভ কৰ্ত্তেন পৰমানন্দ । ঈশ্বৰনুখী বৰিতা পাঠ কৰ্ব্বান স্কযোগ-স্কৰিবা পেনে, আহাৰ-নিদ্ৰাৰ কথা তিনি এবথ্ৰকাৰ ভুলেই যেতেন । বালক-স্বভাব ওন্দাস সাহিত্য, দৰ্শন, বিজ্ঞান, ইতিহাস, অক্ষশাস্ত্ৰ ও বৰ্ম্মশাস্ত্ৰ-পাঠে তন্ময় হ'বে যখন নব্যে নব্যে হাসিব হুলা তুল্‌তেন, তখন সাধাৰণ মানুষ বুৰো উঠতে পার্‌ত না কোন্ ভাবেৰ ভাৰী হ'য়ে পাঠাধ্যয়নেৰ মাঝখানে হান্‌তেন তিনি কোন্ সমন্বয়-অসমন্বয়-দৃষ্টিৰ হাসি । এই হাসিতেই তিনি হ'তেন ভাব-বাজ্যেৰ অধীশ্বৰ, যা ব জন্য হ'তে পাবেন নি তিনি “দলেৰ মানুষ” । বিশ্ব ও ভূমা দিত তাঁকে চিৰানন্দ-তব্দ্ৰেব দোলা । থ্ৰত্যাদিষ্ট-চেতনাৰ ওক-উপদেশসিদ্ধ গৃহী-সন্ধ্যাগী ওন্দাস হয়ত তখন ভাব্‌তেন—জীৱ অগ্ৰজ্ঞ ভগবান্ সৰ্ব্বজ্ঞ—জীৱ অনীশ, ভগবান ঈশ—“ভাভৌ হৌ অভৌ ঈশানীশৌ” । এই ভাব-ধাৰাতেই সান ওন্দাসেৰ ভাব-থ্ৰবুল আননে অনিন্দ্যসুন্দৰ অৰোচ্য হাসি কুটে উঠত নানা বিষয়েৰ থ্ৰহ-পাঠিকালে, এনন সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হ'লে বোব হয় খুব অসম্ভৱ হ'বে না ।

এমনই ছিলেন বৰ্জনাগী, ভাননাগী, যোগনাগী ও ভক্তিনাগী সাধক, বোবাভীত ওন্দাস । আগান নবযৌবনোদগত জ্ঞানান্দৰ পল্লবিত হ'য়ে তথাকথিত উচ্চশিক্ষাৰ আব্‌হাওগায় যখন সংশয়-দোলায় আন্দোলিত হয় তখন এই মহানানবেৰ নজল-হস্ত আডাল দিগেছিল ঝোড়ো হাওগাবে । তাঁৰ স্নেহ-বৰুণা-বাৎসল্য-বসে পৰিপুষ্ট হ'নে অনেবেবই মত মানবতাব পথ অনুসৰণে ব্যাকুলতা আনান । সে পথেৰ পথিক হওনা এ জীৱনে সম্ভৱপৰ হ'বে দিনা, জানি না , তবে মহানানবেৰ নিৰ্দেশ-পালন বন্থপসূ হয়, এই সাধনা ।

আজ তাঁৰ শততন জয়ন্তী-উৎসবে তাঁৰে আনি স্মৰণ কৰি গভীৰ শ্ৰদ্ধা সহকাৰে । ব্ৰহ্মে লীন সান ওন্দাসৰে আনি সাষ্টাঙ্গে থ্ৰণতি বৰি, তাঁৰ আশীৰ্ব্বাদ থ্ৰাৰ্থনা বৰি এই মৰ্গ-বাণীতে—

অপাণিপাদো ভবনো গ্ৰহীতা

পশ্যত্যচক্ষুঃ স শৃণোত্যবনঃ ।

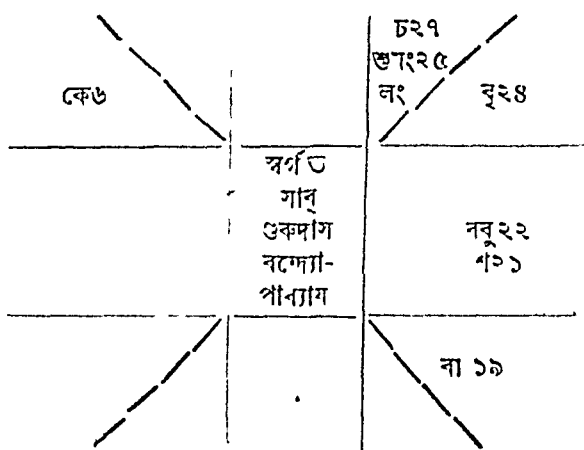
ওন্দাসেৰ জন্ম-কুণ্ডলী ও তাহাৰ চৰিত্ৰ

শ্ৰীঅশোকনাথ শাস্ত্ৰী

স্বৰ্গত পুণ্যথ্ৰোক মনীষিত্ৰবন সান্ ওন্দাস বদ্যোপাধ্যায় মহোদয়েৰ জন্মসময় সন ১২৫০ সান, ১৪ই মাঘ, শুক্লাৱ, মাঘী ওক্ৰা মণ্ডনী (মাঘনী মণ্ডনী), দিবা দশটাব কিঞ্চিৎ পূৰ্বে ।

শকাব্দাদি—১৭৬৫।৯।১৩।৭।৫৫। আনুমানিক ।

তদনুসাবে তাঁহাৰ জন্মকুণ্ডলীখানি দাঁডাৰ এইৰূপ—



শ্রীভৃগু-সংহিতায় ইহাব নিম্নোক্তকপ ফল বর্ণিত হইয়াছে—

“মানে চায়ে তথা ব্যয়ে লগ্নে সৰ্ব্ব চ খেচবাঃ ।
 স্ৰবাবাধ্যো মহাযোগো লগ্নে ভোমঃ সিতঃ শশী ॥
 ধনাচ্যো মতিমান্ খ্যাতো গুণজ্ঞো গুণবান্ ভবেৎ ।
 নীচবংশোদ্ভবো’পি স্যাৎ স নবো নৃপবল্লভঃ ॥
 পিতৃহীনো ভবেদ্বালঃ শৈশবে মাতৃপূজকঃ ।
 দীৰ্ঘায়ুৰ্ধাৰ্মিকঃ শান্তঃ শত্ৰুভিঃ চাপবাজিতঃ ।
 স্ত্রুভাষী বহুপুত্ৰশ্চ হ্যাপ্নগৌৰববক্ষকঃ ॥”

ইহাব সবলার্থ এই যে—

১। মান-স্থান (অৰ্থাৎ—দশম স্থান), আয়-স্থান (অৰ্থাৎ—একাদশ স্থান), ব্যয়-স্থান (অৰ্থাৎ—দ্বাদশ স্থান) ও লগ্নে যখন সকল গ্রহ অবস্থিতি কবেন, তখন জাতক দেবগণেব ও আবাহ্য মহাযোগ প্রাপ্ত হইয়াছেন বুঝিতে হইবে।

এ ক্ষেত্রে দেখা যায় যে, লগ্নে—চন্দ্র-শুক্র-মঙ্গল, দশমে—বাহু, একাদশে—ববি-বুধ-শনি, ও দ্বাদশে—বৃহস্পতি বহিয়াছেন। অৰ্থাৎ—লগ্নে, মানে, আয়ে ও ব্যয়ে আটটি গ্রহ বহিয়াছেন। অবশিষ্ট একটিমাত্র গ্রহ (কেতু) চতুৰ্থে।

২। লগ্নে ভোম (অৰ্থাৎ ভূমিপুত্র মঙ্গল)—সিত (অৰ্থাৎ শুক্র) ও শশী (অৰ্থাৎ চন্দ্র)—ইহাও স্ৰবাবাধ্য মহাযোগ। *

ইহাব ফল কিরূপ হইয়া থাকে, তাহা অতি সংক্ষেপে অথচ স্পষ্ট ভাষায় বিবৃত হইয়াছে — এই যোগেব ফলে জাতক—ধনাচ্য, মতিমান্, খ্যাতিবিশিষ্ট, গুণজ্ঞ ও স্বয়ং গুণবান্ হইয়া থাকেন। সে ব্যক্তি নীচবংশোদ্ভব হইলেও নৃপতিব প্রীতিভাজন হইয়া থাকেন।† এই যোগে জাতক বালক শৈশবে পিতৃহীন ও মাতৃপূজক হইয়া থাকেন, তিনি দীৰ্ঘ আয়ুঃ লাভ কবেন। সাবারণতঃ, একপ জাতককে ধাৰ্মিক ও শান্ত হইতে দেখা যায়। তিনি কখনও শত্ৰুগণকর্তৃক পবাজিত হন না। তিনি স্ত্রুভাষী, বহুপুত্ৰ-বিশিষ্ট হইয়া থাকেন, ও আপ্নগৌৰব-বক্ষণে বক্ষপবিকব হন।

ভৃগু-সংহিতাব উপবি-লিখিত ফলগুলি সংক্ষিপ্ত ভাষায় গ্ৰথিত হইলেও স্বৰ্গত পুৰুষপ্রব-সম্বন্ধে অন্ধবে অন্ধবে সত্য হইয়াছিল। বস্তুতঃ, তাঁহাব সম্বন্ধে যিনি যত প্রবন্ধই লিখুন, বা সভাস্থলে তাঁহাব যত গুণাবলী কীৰ্ত্তনই ককন না কেন—ভৃগুসংহিতাব এই সাড়ে তিনটি অনুষ্টুভ শ্লোকে যাহা যাহা উক্ত হইয়াছে, তাহাব অধিক কোন নুতন কথা বলিতে পাৰিবেন কি ?

এ সম্বন্ধে আবও একটু বিস্তৃত আলোচনা কবা যাউক।

* ‘স্ৰবাবাধ্যো মহাযোগঃ’—মূলেব এই অংশটিকে দুই দিকে যোজিত কৰা যায়—(১) ‘মানে চায়ে তথা ব্যয়ে লগ্নে সৰ্ব্ব চ খেচবাঃ’—দশম, একাদশ, দ্বাদশ ও লগ্নে সকল গ্রহগণেব অবস্থান—ইহাই দেব-নন্দিত মহাযোগ, অথবা (২) ‘লগ্নে ভোমঃ সিতঃ শশী’—ইহাও স্ৰবাবাধ্য মহাযোগ। এই দুই ভাবে অনুযেব নাম—‘মধ্যমণি-ন্যায়’ বা ‘কাকাক্ষিগোলক-ন্যায়’ অনুসাবে অনুয। এ স্থলে এইরূপ দ্বিবিব অনুয়ই কৰ্ত্তব্য।

† তিনি নীচবংশোদ্ভব হইলেও নৃপপ্ৰিয় হইয়া থাকেন—ইহাব অৰ্থ একপ নহে যে—তিনি নীচবংশোদ্ভব ছিলেন ও নৃপপ্ৰিয় হইয়াছিলেন। একপ যোগ যাঁহাবই থাকে—তিনিই নৃপতিব প্ৰিয়পাত্ৰ হন—ইহাই তাৎপৰ্য্য। তিনি যদি উচ্চকুলোদ্ভব হ’ন, তাহা হইলে তাঁহাব পক্ষে নৃপপ্ৰিয় হওয়া বিশেষ কঠিন হয় না। নীচকুলোদ্ভব হইলে নৃপপ্ৰিয় হওয়া স্বভাবতঃ কঠিন। কিন্তু একপ যোগে জন্ম হইলে নীচবংশীয় জাতকও নৃপবল্লভ হইতে পাবেন,—উচ্চবংশীয়েব ত কথাই নাই। ‘নীচবংশোদ্ভবো’পি —এই পদে ‘অপি’-শব্দেব ইহাই তাৎপৰ্য্য।

স্বৰ্গত মনীষী যে ধনবান্ ছিলেন, তদ্বিষয়ে কিছু বলিবাৰ নাই। তিনি বাল্যে দাবিদ্ৰ্য ভোগ কৰিলেও স্বেপাৰ্জিত অৰ্থে ধনাঢ্য খ্যাতি লাভ কৰিয়াছিলেন।

তাঁহাৰ ন্যায নিপুণ-মতি, ধীমান্, বিবেকী পুৰুষ অতি অল্পই দেখা যায়।

তিনি ন্যাযবান্ বিচাৰক, সুপণ্ডিত, ধাৰ্মিক, চৰিত্ৰবান্, মাতৃভক্ত ও অতি অমায়িক সামাজিক ব্যক্তি হিসাবে নানা দিক্ দিয়া অশেষ খ্যাতি অৰ্জন কৰিয়াছিলেন।

তিনি স্বয়ং নানা গুণে ভূষিত ছিলেন ও অপৰেৰ গুণ দেখিলে তাহাৰ উপযুক্ত সমাদৰ কৰিতে পাবিতেন। তদীয় জীৱনচৰিত পৰ্যালোচনা কৰিলে তাঁহাৰ গুণগ্ৰাহিতাৰ অসংখ্য দৃষ্টান্ত দৃষ্টি-গোচৰ হইয়া থাকে।

তিনি দেশেৰ শ্ৰেষ্ঠ ধৰ্ম্মাধিকৰণেৰ একজন বিজ্ঞ, ন্যাযপৰায়ণ, আদৰ্শ বিচাৰক ছিলেন। বিচাৰক হিসাবে তিনি যে কেবল সাধাৰণেৰ নিকটই খ্যাতি লাভ কৰিয়াছিলেন তাহা নহে, ৰাজ-সৰকাৰেও এসম্বন্ধে তাঁহাৰ যথেষ্ট সমাদৰ হইয়াছিল। সৰকাৰেৰ প্ৰীতিৰ নিদৰ্শন-স্বৰূপে তিনি অত্যুচ্চ ৰাজকীয় সন্মান—‘সাব্’ উপাধি—লাভ কৰিয়াছিলেন। অতএৱ, তাঁহাকে ‘নৃপবল্লভ’ বলায় কোন আপত্তি থাকিতে পাবে না।

সাব্ গুৰুদাস বাল্যে পিতৃহীন ছিলেন। কিন্তু তাঁহাৰ পৰমপূজ্য মাতৃদেবীই তাঁহাৰ জীৱনে প্ৰত্যক্ষ-দেৱতা-ৰূপিণী ছিলেন। যখন তিনি বিচাৰক-পদে সমাসীন, তখনও তিনি পদে পদে একান্ত মাতৃভক্তিৰ পৰিচয় দিয়াছেন। বিজাতীয় শিক্ষা যে তাঁহাৰ চিত্তে এতটুকুও বিকাৰ উৎপাদন কৰিতে পাবে নাই—ইহাই তাহাৰ অন্যতম জাজ্বল্যমান নিদৰ্শন। এই মাতৃভক্তিই ছিল তাঁহাৰ জীৱনেৰ মূল-সাধনা। আৰ এই সাধনায় সিদ্ধিলাভ কৰিয়াই তিনি আজ আমাদেৰ আদৰ্শ-ৰূপে পৰিগণিত হইতেছেন। এই মাতৃভক্তিৰ দিক্ দিয়া গত ষতাব্দীৰ আৰ একজন মহাপ্ৰাণ ৰাঙ্গালী পুৰুষ-কেশৰীৰ সহিত তাঁহাৰ তুলনা দেওয়া যায়—তিনি স্বৰ্গত প্ৰাতঃস্মৰণীয় ঈশ্বৰচন্দ্ৰ বিদ্যাসাগৰ। একথা বলা অত্যুক্তি হইবে না যে, স্বকৃত্ৰিম মাতৃভক্তিই এই দুই পুৰুষ-প্ৰবৰকে তাঁহাদিগেৰ উন্নতিৰ পথে পাথেয় যোগাইয়াছিল।

সাব্ গুৰুদাস দীৰ্ঘায়ুঃ ছিলেন। জ্যোতিষেৰ মতে কাহাৰও সত্তৰেৰ অধিক বয়স হইলেই তাঁহাকে দীৰ্ঘায়ুঃ বলা যায়। মৃত্যুকালে ইঁহাৰ বয়স হইয়াছিল প্ৰায় ৭৫।

তিনি যে ধাৰ্মিক ছিলেন একথা বলাৰ কোন প্ৰয়োজন আছে বলিয়া বোধ হয় না। পাশ্চাত্য উচ্চশিক্ষা-গ্ৰহণেৰ পৰও হিন্দুধৰ্মে বিন্দুমাত্ৰও আস্থা হাবান নাই একপ দুইজন মনীষীৰ নাম আমাদেৰ স্মৰণে আসে—একজন স্বৰ্গত স্মনামধন্য ভূদেৰ মুখোপাধ্যায়, আৰ দ্বিতীয় ব্যক্তি স্বৰ্গত পুণ্যশ্ৰোত্ৰ সাব্ গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়। সাব্ গুৰুদাস যে কেবল স্বধৰ্ম্মে আস্থাবান্ ছিলেন তাহা নহে, তিনি একজন কঠোৰ আচাৰনিষ্ঠ আনুষ্ঠানিক হিন্দু ছিলেন। একাৰণে প্ৰধান বিচাৰালয়ে বিচাৰকেৰ পদে সমাসীন থাকিয়াও গামছা কাঁধে ফেলিয়া প্ৰতিবেশীৰ গৃহে নবজাত শিশুৰ ষষ্টিপূজা কৰিতেও তিনি কুণ্ঠিত হ’ন নাই। এইকপ স্বধৰ্ম্মনিষ্ঠা আজ এই ভ্ৰষ্টাচাৰেৰ দিনে হয়ত ‘গোঁডামি’ বলিয়া উপেক্ষিত হইবে। কিন্তু স্মৰণে ৰাখা উচিত যে গীতায় শ্ৰীভগবান্ স্বয়ং এইপ্ৰকাৰ স্বধৰ্ম্মানুবাগেৰই প্ৰশংসা কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন—‘স্বধৰ্ম্মে নিবনং শ্ৰেয়ঃ’।

সাব্ গুৰুদাসেৰ প্ৰকৃতি ছিল অতি শান্ত। ‘শান্ত’ বলিলে কেবল যে ‘শান্ত-শিষ্ট’ বুঝিতে হইবে, তাহা নহে। ‘শম’ অৰ্থে অতৰিদ্ৰিয়-নিগ্ৰহ। তাঁহাৰ অন্তঃকৰণ যে সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপেই তাঁহাৰ বশীভূত ছিল ইহা বহু ক্ষেত্ৰেই দৃষ্ট হইয়াছে। তাহা ছাড়া তিনি চিৰদিন অনাডম্বৰ শান্তিময় জীৱন-যাপনেৰ প্ৰয়াসী ছিলেন। আৰ কেহ ৰখনও তাঁহাকে উত্তেজিত বা ক্ৰুদ্ধ হইতে দেখিয়াছেন বলিয়াও শুনা যায় না। এই সকল দিক্ বিচাৰ কৰিলে এক ৰখায় তাঁহাকে ‘শান্ত’ বলাই সুসঙ্গত।

একপ উদাৰ-চৰিত্ৰ ব্যক্তি যে ঐক্য-কৰ্ত্ত্বৰ নিৰ্ভাৰিত হইবেন—একপ বয়স নবা যাব না । বস্তুতঃ সাৰ্ৱ গুৰুদাস ‘অজাতশত্ৰু’ ছিলেন বলিলেও অত্যুক্তি হয় না ।

স্বৰ্গত সাৰ্ৱ গুৰুদাস স্বভাষী ছিলেন । তিনি বখনও বাগাবেও বটুকথা—এমন কি এৰটু উচু গলায় কথা পৰ্য্যন্ত বলিয়াছেন বলিয়া শুনা যায় না । তিনি অতিশয় স্বভাষী, সদানাপী, নমুন-বাক্ পুৰুষ ছিলেন । কি পৰিচিত, কি অপৰিচিত—কি উচ্চ, কি নীচ—কি অনবদ্য, কি অধিক-বদ্য—কি মুৰ্খ, কি বিদ্বান্—সকল শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকের সহিত সনভাবে মৃদুহাস্য সহবাবে নমুনভাবে বাক্যালাপ কৰিতেন, যেন কত দিনের পৰিচয়—বত আপনাব লোক । বলে যিনি একবানও তাঁহান সহিত পৰিচয়ের সৌভাগ্য অৰ্জন বৰিমাছিলেন, তিনিই তাঁহান অনুভাণী ভক্ত হইয়া উঠিলেন ।

সার্ৱ গুৰুদাসের বহু পুত্ৰ । কেবল বহু পুত্ৰ বলিলে বথার্থ পৰিচয় অস্পষ্ট থাকিবা যায় । বলিতে হয়—তাঁহাব প্ৰত্যেক পুত্ৰই স্বপুত্ৰ, প্ৰত্যেকেই স্বপণ্ডিত, সচচৰিত্ৰ, এনবান্, গুণবান্ ও বিনয়ী । বেহ বা প্ৰোজ্জল প্ৰতিভাৰ আধাৰ, আৰাৰ বেহ বা লোকপূজ্য পিতৃদেৱেন মতই সবল, নিৰাভিনাদ, ধৰ্মপ্ৰাণ, শাস্ত্ৰ ও আদৰ্শ চৰিত্ৰ । যদি—‘পুত্ৰে বশসি তোয়ে চ ননাণাং পুণ্যলক্ষণং’—এ আভাৱবটি সত্য হয়, তাহা হইলে সাৰ্ৱ গুৰুদাস যে প্ৰথম দুইটি বিষয়ে নিৰ্ভেৰ বহু স্কৃতিৰ পৰিচয় দিয়া গিয়াছেন ইহাতে আশাৰ নিঃসন্দেহ ।

আৰ সৰ্বশেষ অথচ সকলৰ সাৰ কথা হইল যে তিনি ছিলেন আশ্ৰয়গোব-নন্দন । তিনি মাতৃভক্ত, জিতেন্দ্ৰিয়, সংযতচিত্ত, বিনয়ী, শাস্ত্ৰ, ধৰ্মপ্ৰাণ, সৰ্বজনপ্ৰিয়, শিষ্টভাষী ব্ৰাহ্মণ ছিলেন—একথা বলিলেই হয়ত এযুগের উচ্ছৃঙ্খল-প্ৰবৃত্তিৰ পোষকগণ বলিয়া উঠিবেন যে, একপ লোক সাধাৰণতঃ নেকদণ্ডহীন ও দুৰ্বলচিত্ত হয় । কিন্তু সাৰ্ৱ গুৰুদাস-সম্বন্ধে একপ আশঙ্কা বৰা উচিত নয় । কাৰণ, তাঁহাব মাতৃভক্তি, ধৰ্মানুবাগ, সচচৰিত্ৰ ও ন্যাযনিষ্ঠা তাঁহাকে দৃঢ়চিত্ত কৰিবা তুলিয়াছিল । তিনি মৃদুভাষী ছিলেন বটে, কিন্তু চৰিত্ৰের দৃঢ়তা তাঁহাব ছিল অনন্যসাধাৰণ—কখনও কোন অন্যায়ের তিনি প্ৰশ্ন দিতেন না । মহাকবি ভবভূতি যে বলিয়াছেন—লোকোত্তৰ পুৰুষের চৰিত্ৰ কুস্তম হইতেও স্কৃমাৰ, অথচ বজ্ৰ হইতেও দৃঢ়তৰ হয়—ইহা তাঁহাব চৰিত্ৰ-দৰ্শনে স্পষ্ট অনুভূত হইত ।

অনিপুণ চিত্ৰকৰ যেমন তুলিকাৰ সামান্য এৰ আৰটি টানে তাঁহাব চিত্ৰৰে স্বপৰিস্কৃট কৰিবা তুলিয়া থাকেন, ভৃগু-সংহিতাৰ এই স্বাক্ষৰ শ্লোক বখটিও সেইকপ স্বৰ্গত স্বভাষী ও স্বৰবায় মহাপ্ৰাণ মনীষীৰ আদৰ্শ চৰিত্ৰৰে অতি উজ্জল ভাবে ফুটাইবা তুলিয়াছে । ইহাব অধিক বলিবাৰ আৰ কিছুই থাকিতে পাৰে না । এই পুৰুষ-প্ৰবৰের বখা স্মৰণে আসিলেই মহাকবি ভবভূতিৰ সেই অনবদ্য শ্লোকটি উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবা বাক্য-কুসুমঞ্জলি অৰ্পণের আকাঙ্ক্ষা হয়—

“প্ৰিথৱাষা বৃজিৰিনয়মধুবো বাচি নিয়মঃ

প্ৰকৃতা কল্যাণী মতিবনবগীতঃ পৰিচয়ঃ ।

পুৰা বা পশ্চাত্মা তদিদমবিপৰ্য্যাসিতবসঃ

বহস্যং সাধুনাগনুপধি বিশুদ্ধং বিজয়তে ॥’

হিন্দুপ্ৰাণ গুৰুদাস

শ্ৰীমতিলাল বায়

এৰ ঐত বৎসৰ পূৰ্বেৰ বাংলায় এক মহাপুৰুষ জন্মগ্ৰহণ কৰিমাছিলেন । তাঁহাব পুণ্যবখা আলোচনা বৰাব অধিকাৰ পাইবাছি বলিয়া নিজেৰে ধন্য মনে কৰি । তাঁহাবে চক্ষে দেখিবাছি,

কিন্তু তাঁহার সহিত প্রত্যক্ষ পৰিচয়ের সৌভাগ্য লাভ হয় নাই। তাঁর পৰলোক-গমনের ২৫ বৎসর কাল পরে বাংলায় সেই মনীষী প্রতিভাশালী মহাপুরুষের তপঃশীর্ণ মূর্তিটি স্মৃতি-পথে আনিয়া ক্ষীণ কণ্ঠে তাঁর স্তুতিগীতি কবির মাত্র।

১৮৪৪ খৃষ্টাব্দে বাংলার গৌরব শ্রদ্ধেয় গুরুদাসের জন্ম হয়। ১৯৪৪ খৃষ্টাব্দে ১০০ বৎসর পূর্ণ হইবে। ১০০ বৎসর পূর্বের আগবা বিগতাবা গুরুদাসকে পাইয়াছিলাম। তাঁহার জীবনের ইতিবৃত্ত আলোচনা করার মত সন্মোহ ও সাধ্য আমার নাই। আমি তাঁহার মহান জীবনের দিব্যানুভূতি যেকপ পাই, তাহারই যৎকিঞ্চিৎ ব্যক্ত করার চেষ্টা করিব।

সহস্র বৎসরের বাংলার ইতিহাস আলোচনা করিলে দেখা যায়—বাঙ্গালী আৰ্য্যসংস্কৃতির ভিত্তির উপর এক অভিনব বিশিষ্ট জাতীয়তা নিজস্ব ভঙ্গীতে প্রকাশ করিতে চাহিয়াছে। বাঙ্গালীর ব্রাহ্মণ্য প্রতিভা অভিনব মূর্তিতে রূপ পাইয়াছে নবদ্বীপে, ভট্টপন্নীতে, কোটালীপাডায়। ক্রমে দেখা যায় স্থান, কাল, পাত্র অতিক্রম করিয়া বাঙ্গালী সর্বত্র বেদ উপনিষদ্, স্মৃতি, ন্যায়, বর্ষশাস্ত্র প্রভৃতি আৰ্য্য সংস্কৃতিবই উপাদানে এক বিশাল হিন্দুজাতি গড়ার আয়োজন করিয়াছে। এই মহাপ্রয়াসের গতিবোধ হইয়াছে বিদেশী বাহ্যশক্তির প্রভাবে বহুবার। ইংরাজাধিকৃত বাংলা প্রথম অবস্থায় অধিকতর দিশেহারা হইয়া জাতীয়তার মূলে কুঠাবাঘাত করিতে চাহিয়াছে। কিন্তু অস্থিকঙ্কালসার বাংলার ব্রাহ্মণ্যশক্তি অভাবনীয়রূপে তাহা প্রতিহত করিয়া ভাবতীয় সংস্কৃতির প্রবাহ অক্ষুণ্ণ রাখিয়াছে। গুরুদাসের জন্মকালেও বাংলার উদীয়মান শক্তি আশ্রয় ছিল না। স্ব-ভাব ও স্ব-ধর্ম বর্জন করিয়া অসংখ্য প্রকার সংস্কারের ভিতর দিয়া বাঙ্গালী সেদিনও নূতন কি হইতে চাহিয়াছে। এই ভীমবর্ত বিদীর্ণ করিয়া যিনি “স্বধর্মো নিধনং শ্রেয়ঃ” সঙ্কল্পে বিজয়ী বীরের মত জাতির পুরোভাগে দাঁড়াইয়া ছিলেন, তাঁহার অসাধারণ চবিত্তের আদর্শে তথাকথিত প্রগতি স্তম্ভিত ও ইতিকর্তব্যবিমূঢ় হইয়া পড়িয়াছিল। আজও তাঁহার সেই অমর প্রভাবের প্রয়োজন ও সহায়তা স্বীকার করিতে হইতেছে।

হিসাব কমিয়া জাতীয় অভ্যুত্থান ও মুক্তির পথ নিৰ্বাপদ নহে। উহা আশ্রিত প্রেবণাবলেই সম্ভব হয়। হিসাবের অঙ্কে ভুল থাকিয়া যাইতে পারে, কিন্তু ঈশ্বর-বিধান আশ্রয় করিয়া জাতির শ্রেয়-সাধনের অগ্রগতি যেখানে, সেখানে আডম্বর ও উত্তেজনাপূর্ণ সমাবোহ ব্যাপাবে কিছু না ঘটিলেও প্রসন্ন-সলিল গঙ্গাপ্রবাহের ন্যায় সে গতি অপ্রতিহত হইয়া মুক্তি-সমুদ্রে উপনীত হইবেই। পূজ্যপাদ গুরুদাস ছিলেন এই অব্যর্থ সনাতন পথের অন্যতম দিশাবী। সময়সংক্ষেপ করার জন্য যাহা জাতীয় সংস্কৃতির বিবোধী, বিচিত্র সংস্কারপন্থী তাহাও এই শতবর্ষ পরে যদি বুঝিয়া দেখেন যে, সে পথও বিলম্বিত হইয়াছে, শুধু সময়ের দীর্ঘতা নহে, পথও তির্যক্ হইয়া পড়িয়াছে, জাতীয় জীবন-সমস্যার জটিলতা অধিক বৃদ্ধি পাইয়াছে, তাহা হইলে বলিব—গুরুদাসের সাধনা সিদ্ধ হইয়াছে। দেশবৈশিষ্ট্য গুরুদাস কোনও সংস্কারের প্রতিবাদী না হইয়া ব্রাহ্মণ্যসংস্কৃতিকেই আঁকড়িয়া ধরিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহার ধর্মনিষ্ঠা অটল হিমাদ্রির ন্যায় শক্ত ছিল। জাতীয় জীবনতরী নিকষিগ্ন হইয়া আজ এইখানেই আশ্রয় লইতে চায়। হিন্দুজাতির মেকমজ্জায় আজিও শক্তি সঞ্চারিত হইয়া তাহার যে পুনরুত্থানের আয়ু ও উৎসাহ পায়, তাহা দেশপূজ্য গুরুদাস-শ্রেণীর মহাপুরুষদের স্বধর্ম-নিষ্ঠায়। জাতি যদি শক্তিশালী হইতে চাহে, মাথা তুলিয়া আপপরিচয় দিতে সমর্থ হয়, তবে তাহাকে আত্ম-বিস্মৃতির জটিলতা হইতে মুক্তি লইতে হইবে। সর্বপ্রকার ব্যথার চেয়ে আত্মবিস্মৃতির বেদনা যে কত পীড়াদায়ক, পরাধীনতার শৃঙ্খলে তাহা প্রতি পদে অনুভূত হয়। গুরুদাসের উজ্জ্বল জীবন এই নৈবাশ্রয়ময় অন্ধকারে আজিও প্রজ্জ্বলিত মৃতপ্রদীপ বিধিয়া জাতির পথ নির্দেশ করে। ভাবতীয় সংস্কৃতির মহিমা-স্তুতি ঐহিকদের কণ্ঠে, তাঁহাদের কেহই ইহা অস্বীকার করিবেন না।

জগতে সুবিধাবাদী হইয়া কেহ বাঁচে না। কোন জাতিও টিকে না, যদি তাহান পশ্চাতে কোন এক বিশিষ্ট সংস্কৃতি বর্তমান না থাকে। আগুন নিপদুচ্চাবেন সুবিধাবাদ পথ যে আশ্রয় কৰে, তাহাব চক্ষে অচিৰে অশ্রু বাবে—ইহা প্রতিদিন লক্ষ্য পড়ে। তবুও আগুন এ মোহ ছাড়ে না। যেখানে শত সুবিধা গড়াগড়ি দিয়াছে, বাংলার গুরুদাস গব্বানুততিনে সৰ্বপ্রধান লোভ সংবরণ বদিয়া আগাইয়া চলিয়াছেন জীবন পৰে জয়-লক্ষ্যে। ঊনবিংশ শতাব্দীৰ শেষাংশ হইতে বিংশ শতাব্দীৰ আদিযুগ পর্যন্ত গুরুদাসেৰ সমুজ্জল জীবন-দৃষ্টান্ত ও লোকাভিত চিত্ৰিত প্ৰত্যেক অভ্যুদয়বান্ধী হিন্দু বাঙ্গালীৰ অনুসৰণীয়।

হিন্দুৰ সংস্কৃতি ভাষা ও ভাব মাত্ৰ নহে। তাহান মুৰ্ত্তি অনুবাদ আছে। হিন্দুৰ প্ৰথম সংস্কার গুৰু, মন্ত্ৰ ও প্ৰতিমাৰ। পিতা, মাতা, ভগ্নভ্ৰাতা, আচাৰ্য্য, ঈশ—এই সবল ঐশ্বৰ্য্য কাছে বাঙ্গালী শ্ৰদ্ধামন্ত্ৰে শিক্ষা লাভ কৰে। ইহাদেবই আশীৰ্ব্বাদী মন্ত্ৰৰূপে বাঙ্গালীৰ হৃদয়ে দিয়া প্ৰতিমাৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰে। সৌভাগ্যবান্ গুরুদাসেৰ ওকমূৰ্ত্তি ছিলেন স্বয়ং গৰ্ভধাৰিণী জননী। নামেৰ বৰ্ণে যে মন্ত্ৰ-ধ্বনি তাঁহাৰ কানেৰ ভিতৰ দিয়া মনৰ স্পৰ্শ বৰিত সেই বাণী হৃদয়েৰ শ্ৰদ্ধা ছানিয়া তাঁহান মনো-নন্দিৰে যে প্ৰতিমা গড়িয়া তুলিয়াছিল, সে হৃদয়-দেবতাৰ চৰণ আশ্ৰয় বদিয়া তিনি শেষ দিন পৰ্য্যন্ত আশ্ৰয়ান্ হইয়া ছিলেন। আশ্ৰয়বিস্মৃতি কোন দিন তাহাকে শূণ্ণ বনিত পালে নাই।

গুরুদাস বিদেশী বিদ্যায় পাবদশিতা লাভ কৰিয়াছিলেন। কিন্তু এই বিদ্যা তাঁহাৰে সম্বোধিত কৰিতে পাবে নাই। এই জন্য উহান উৎকৃষ্ট ব্যবহাৰ-ওপে তিনি দেশেৰ নিৰাট ও বাহুশক্তিৰ নিৰাট শ্ৰেষ্ঠ আসন লাভ কৰিয়াছিলেন। তাই দেখি—লৰ্ড বৰ্জন সম্ৰাট্ এডোয়ার্ডেৰ বাজ্যভিষেক-কালে হিন্দু সমাজেৰ পক্ষ হইতে যখন তাঁহাকে বিলাতে পাঠাইবাৰ প্ৰস্তাব কৰিলেন, তখন তিনি অবলীলাক্ৰমে সে বাজসম্মান প্ৰত্যাখ্যান কৰিয়া বলিলেন, “ইহাতে আমাৰ ধৰ্ম ও সমাজ ক্ষুণ্ণ হইবে।” লৰ্ড বৰ্জন গুরুদাসেৰ ধৰ্মনিষ্ঠাৰ প্ৰতি সশ্ৰদ্ধ হইয়া বলিয়াছিলেন, “আপনাৰ মত ধৰ্মনিষ্ঠ ব্যক্তিকে হিন্দুসমাজ যদি ত্যাগ কৰে, তবে হিন্দুসমাজই শক্তিহীন হইবে, গৌৰব হাবাইবে।” গুরুদাস তদুত্তৰে আশ্ৰয়গৌৰবেৰ প্ৰাধান্য না বাখিয়া সগৰ্বে উত্তৰ দিয়াছিলেন, “হিন্দুসমাজে তাঁহাৰ মত অসংখ্য মানুহ আছে। ধৰ্ম ক্ষুণ্ণ কৰিলে ক্ষতি তাঁহাৰই হইবে। হিন্দুসমাজ অক্ষয়বট, ক্ষতি সেখানে স্পৰ্শ কৰে না।”

হইতে পাবে ইহা সংবক্ষণশীল মনোবৃত্তিৰ পৰিচয়, সঙ্কীৰ্ণতা। কিন্তু আমবা তাঁহাৰ আত্মিক শক্তিৰ দিগদৰ্শনেৰ জন্যই ইহা দেখাইতেছি। প্ৰকৃতি-ভেদে গতিৰ ভিন্নতা আমবা অস্বীকাৰ কৰি না, কিন্তু যে সত্যমন্ত্ৰে গুরুদাসেৰ দীক্ষা, সেই মন্ত্ৰশক্তিৰ পৰিচয় দিতে যিনি অতিবড় লোভেৰ ক্ষেত্ৰেও স্থিৰ থাকিতে পাবেন, তাঁহাৰ চৰিত্ৰবেৰ দিক্‌টাই আগাদেৰ গ্ৰহণীয়। স্যাব আশুতোষকেও আমবা এই একই উপাদানে গঠিত বলিয়া মনে কৰি। তিনিও মাতৃমন্ত্ৰেৰ মৰ্যাদা বক্ষায় বিলাত গমনে পৰাঙমুখ হইয়াছিলেন। হিন্দু সুবিধাবাদী নহে, অধ্যাত্মবাদী। জীব-ধৰ্ম তাহাৰ ধৰ্ম নহে, আশ্ৰয় ধৰ্মই তাহাৰ লক্ষ্য। এইখানে সংযম-পুত চৰিত্ৰবেৰ লইয়া গুরুদাস সম্যক্ দৃষ্টি লাভ কৰিয়া-ছিলেন। স্বদেশী যুগেৰ প্ৰবল প্লাবনে তাঁহাকে আমবা আশ্ৰয়বিস্মৃত হইতে দেখি নাই। বাজ-সৰকাৰে উচ্চকৰ্ণে নিযোজিত থাকিয়াও তাঁহাকে কোন দিন আত্মবিক্ৰয় কৰিতে দেখা যায় নাই। ১৯১২ খৃষ্টাব্দে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সংস্থাপিত হইলে, লৰ্ড কাৰমাইকেল তাহাৰ জন্য যে ১৫ জন সদস্য মনোনীত কৰেন, তাহাৰ মধ্যে গুরুদাসও ছিলেন একজন। কিন্তু যে কোন কাৰণেই হউক—সে কথা এখানে উল্লেখ কৰাৰ প্ৰয়োজন নাই—গুরুদাস তাহা অমানমুখে অস্বীকাৰ কৰিয়াছিলেন। তিনি প্ৰবাবীন জাতিৰ একজন হইলেও, যে আত্মসংস্কৃতিৰ জয়টাকা তাঁহাৰ ললাটে শোভা পাইয়াছে চিৰদিন, তাহা কোন দিন ম্লান হয় নাই।

গুৰুদাসেৰ চৰিত্ৰে সৰ্ব্বাপেক্ষা মহৎ গুণ ছিল—তিনি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ চৰম শিক্ষায় প্ৰথম স্থান অধিকাৰ কৰিলেও, আইন পৰীক্ষায় সৰ্ব্বোচ্চ স্থানেৰ অধিকাৰী হইলেও, ওকালতি ব্যবসায়ে তাঁহাৰ কেহ প্ৰতিদ্বন্দ্বী না থাকিলেও, তাঁহাকে কোন ক্ষেত্ৰে আত্মপ্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ দিকে দৃষ্টি বাখিতে দেখি নাই। তিনি ১৮৮৮ খৃষ্টাব্দে হাইকোর্টেৰ বিচাৰপতিপদে নিযোজিত হন। ১৯০১ খৃষ্টাব্দেৰ পূৰ্বে জেজেদেৰ ৬০ বৎসৰ বয়সে অবকাশ লওয়াৰ যে আইন ছিল, তাহা বদ হইয়া যায়। কিন্তু নিৰ্লোভ গুৰুদাস তাহা ন্যায্য বলিয়া মনে কৰেন নাই। ভবিষ্যতেৰ পথ আঙুলিয়া দীৰ্ঘদিন জেজেৰ আসন অধিকৃত বাখা তাঁহাৰ স্বভাবে ছিল না। তিনি ১৯০৪ খৃষ্টাব্দে সে আসন স্বেচ্ছায় ত্যাগ কৰেন। তাঁহাকে নাইট উপাধি দেওয়া হয়, তিনি তাহা অস্বীকাৰ কৰেন নাই, কিন্তু গলগ্ৰহ মনে কৰিয়াছিলেন। যে সংস্কৃতি গুৰুদাসকে এমন অনবদ্য চৰিত্ৰ দেয়, সেই অমৰ সংস্কৃতিৰ জয়ধ্বজা ধৰিয়া যাহাৰা বিজয়াভিযান কৰিবে, গুৰুদাস অন্তৰীক্ষ হইতে তাহাদেৰ যাত্ৰাৰ পৰম সহায় হইবেন, ইহা আমবা নিৰ্বন্ধে স্বীকাৰ কৰিব।

গুৰুদাসেৰ দেশ-সাবন পৰ্ব্বৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিয়া প্ৰবন্ধ দীৰ্ঘ কৰিব না। তিনি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰ হইয়াছিলেন। ১৯০৬ খৃষ্টাব্দে জাতীয় বিদ্যালয়েৰ সহ-সভাপতি হইয়া তিনি জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ পথ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিয়াছিলেন। দেশেৰ অসংখ্য অনুষ্ঠান-প্ৰতিষ্ঠানে তাঁহাৰ সহযোগিতাৰ কথাও সৰ্বজন-বিদিত। বাংলাৰ জাতীয় জীৱনে গুৰুদাসেৰ স্থান অতুলনীয়।

উপসংহাৰে বলিব—ভাৰতবৰ্ষ আৰু পৰাবীৰ্য্যতাৰ শৃঙ্খল-বহনে অসমৰ্থ, মুক্তি তাহাৰ চাই। সে মুক্তি বাজপুৰুষদেৰ মুখেৰ কথাৰ প্ৰতিধ্বনি কৰিয়া বলিতে হয়—বিপ্লবে অথবা পাৰ্লামেণ্টেৰ প্ৰসাদে হয়তো লাভ হইতে পাৰে। ভাৰত হয়তো দিগ্ভ্ৰাত হইবে। বাঙালীকে গুৰুদাসপ্ৰমুখ আত্মসংস্কৃতিনিষ্ঠ মহাপুৰুষগণ বুঝাইয়া গিয়াছেন, জাতীয় মুক্তিৰ এক তৃতীয় পন্থা আছে—তাহা বিপ্লব অথবা অনুগ্ৰহ নহে, তাহা আত্মগঠনেৰই পথ। জাতীয় মুক্তি-সাবনেৰ অসংখ্য পথে অসংখ্য যাত্ৰী, এই তৃতীয়পন্থী তাহাদেৰ কাহাৰও প্ৰতিবাদ কৰিবে না। বাংলাৰ বৰণীয় সভান গুৰুদাসেৰ অভয় কণ্ঠ এখনও মুখবিত। তাঁৰ উদাত্তবাণীৰ অৰ্থ—জাতীয় মুক্তিৰ জন্য জাতীয় সংস্কৃতিৰ পুনৰুদ্ধাৰ চাই। সেই সংস্কৃতি শ্ৰুতি-স্মৃতি-ন্যায়-প্ৰবৰ্ত্তিত। জাতিৰ প্ৰতি ব্যাটী যদি সেই নীতি আশ্ৰয় কৰিতে পাৰে, তাহাতে যে সমষ্টি সংগঠিত হইবে, তাহা সংস্কাৰক না হইলেও, গোঁড়া সংবৰ্দ্ধনশীল হইবে না। আত্মবিস্মৃতিৰ যোৰ কাটাইবাৰ জন্য জাতীয় সংস্কৃতিই আশ্ৰয়ণীয়। সেই অমোঘ সংস্কৃতিৰ ভিত্তিৰ উপৰ দাঁড়াইয়া অন্তৰীক্ষ হইতে মহাপুৰুষ গুৰুদাস আজও বজ্ৰগন্তীৰ কণ্ঠে বলিতেছেন—ধন, সম্পদ, লোক-সংখ্যা, বিদ্যা, প্ৰভৃৎ জাতীয় মুক্তিৰ হেতু নহে। জাতীয় সংস্কৃতিৰ সংবৰ্দ্ধন-শক্তি উদ্ধুদ্ধ কৰিতে পাবিলে, সেই আশ্ৰয়ে ভাগবত প্ৰসাদ অবতৰণ কৰিবে, সুবিধা-সুযোগ আসিবে, বিবাতাৰ অদৃশ্য হস্তেৰ সাহায্যে মানুহ হইবে দিব্য সংস্কৃতিৰ যন্ত্ৰ। সে সংস্কৃতি ভাৰতেৰ বৈদিক সংস্কৃতি—ব্ৰহ্মণ্য বীৰ্য্য। প্ৰত্যেক হিন্দুৰ তাহাতে অধিকাৰ আছে। আৰ্য্য শব্দেৰ নামাতৰ হিন্দু হইয়াছে। আমবা যদি খাঁটি হিন্দু হইতে পাৰি, তবেই গুৰুদাসেৰ জীৱনাদৰ্শেৰ কথা উপলব্ধি কৰিতে পাৰিব। তিনি যে অমৃতবিন্দু স্মৃতিৰ আকাৰে বাখিয়া গিয়াছেন, তাহাকে কেন্দ্ৰ কৰিয়া যদি আমবা উদ্ধুদ্ধ হইতে পাৰি, আমাদেৰ অভ্যুত্থান অবশ্যজ্ঞাবী। গুৰুদাসেৰ এই দান বাঙালী আজ নতজানু হইয়া গ্ৰহণ কৰিবে কি?

পুণ্যশ্লোক গুৰুদাস

• শ্ৰীৰট্টবনাথ ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য

বৰ্ত্তমান সময়ে ভাৰতে, বিশেষতঃ বাঙ্গালা দেশে, সকল দিবে যেনেপ পৰিস্থিতি তাহাতে স্যব গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়েৰ জন্মশতবাৰ্ষিকীৰ অনুষ্ঠান এৰাটি নিশেষ লক্ষণীয় ঘটনা। প্ৰায় পঁচিশ বৎসৰ পূৰ্বেৰ সমাজজীৱনে অতুলনীয় প্ৰভাৱশালী পুৰুষৰূপে, অগণিত জনহিতবন প্ৰতিষ্ঠান ও অনুষ্ঠানেৰ নেতা, স্বহৃৎ ও শুভচিত্তবৰূপে শেষ নিঃশ্বাস পৰ্য্যন্ত কৰ্ম্মনৰ জীৱন যাপন কৰিয়া, দেশ-বাসীৰ অন্তৰে অকুণ্ঠ পূজাৰ অৰ্ঘ্য পাইয়া তাঁহাৰ জীৱনসংবিভা অন্তৰ্গত হয়। তাঁহাৰ নাম অক্ষয় স্বৰ্ণলিপিতে ইতিহাসেৰ নিকষ ফলকৈ উৎকীৰ্ণ ৰহিয়াছে—বিত্ত তাঁহাৰ চৰিতৰখা ও ব্যক্তিত্বৰ যে ছবি সেদিন পৰ্য্যন্ত সাধাৰণেৰ মনে স্পষ্টে দেখাপাতে ভাস্বৰ ছিল, তাহা কালেৰ ক্ৰমবৰ্দ্ধমান ব্যৱধানে অক্ষুণ্ণ হইয়া পড়িতেছে। ইহা অনিবাৰ্য্য। জীৱনেৰ সবল সম্পদেই বালেৰ প্ৰবাহে দুৰে যাইয়া পড়ে—ক্ৰমে উহাতে বিলীন হয়। কিন্তু এই সৰ্ব্বহৰ বালেৰ গ্ৰাস হইতে উদ্ধাৰ কৰিয়া কতকগুলি স্মৃতিকে উজ্জীৱিত ৰাখা জাতিৰ মুখ্য বৰ্তব্য ও সমাজ-বল্যাণেৰ নিদান। স্যব গুৰুদাস সেই চিৰস্মৰণীয় পুণ্যশ্লোক পৰ্য্যায়ৰ বিশিষ্ট পুৰুষ ছিলেন। তাঁহাৰ চৰিতকথাৰ আলোচনাৰ কিশোৰ ও যুবক উৎসাহে উদ্দীপ্ত হয়, প্ৰবীণ ও বৃদ্ধ কৰ্ত্তব্যেৰ গহন পথে নিৰ্দেশ লাভ কৰে, জটিলতা ও অন্ধকাৰেৰ মাৰো কৰ্ম্মী আলোকেৰ সন্ধান পায়। ধ্ৰুৱ-আদৰ্শেৰ মূৰ্ত্ত-বিগ্ৰহ বলিয়া যাঁহাদেৰ মৰ্য্যাদা নিকপিত ও সৰ্ব্বজনশিৰোবাৰ্য্য, স্যব গুৰুদাস তাঁহাদেৰ পূৰ্বোভাগে। বৰ্ত্তমানে আমবা যে অবস্থায় আসিয়া পড়িয়াছি তাহাকে প্ৰতীচীৰ নিকট সম্পূৰ্ণ আত্ম-সমৰ্পণ বলিলে অত্যুক্তি হয় না। ইংৰাজী আমলেৰ আৰম্ভ হইতে উত্তৰোত্তৰ এই দিকে জাতি অগ্ৰসৰ হইতেছিল, কিন্তু বৰ্ত্তমান বিশ্ব-সংগ্ৰামেৰ পৰিণামে সেই পশ্চিমমুখী গতি চৰমে পৌঁছিয়াছে বা পৌঁছিব—একপ মনে কবিকাৰ পৰ্য্যাপ্ত কাৰণ আছে। শিক্ষায় ও দীক্ষায়, ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয়, নৈতিক ও অৰ্থনৈতিক আদৰ্শে, জীৱনধাৰণেৰ ও সমাজ-সেবাৰ উপায় ও উপকৰণে, নিজ শক্তি ও সামৰ্থ্যেৰ প্ৰয়োগে—সকল বিষয়ে আনাদেৰ অসহায় পৰমুখাপেক্ষী ভাব গত কয়েক বৎসৰে যেকপ প্ৰমাণিত ও পৰিস্কুট হইয়াছে, তৎপূৰ্বে দুই শত বৎসৰেৰ ইতিহাসেও তাহা কখন হয় নাই। ইহা অনুভৱী ও চিন্তাশীল ব্যক্তিমাত্ৰেই প্ৰাণে প্ৰাণে উপলব্ধি কৰিতেছেন। কিন্তু অপ্ৰতিবোধ্য ঘটনাৰ বশে ইহা আসিয়া পড়িলেও দেশেৰ অন্তৰ হইতে এখনও স্বাতন্ত্ৰ্যেৰ স্পৃহা বা স্বপ্ন গুছিয়া যায় নাই। পৰতন্ত্ৰতাৰ নিগড়ে বদ্ধ হইয়াও সে আপন ঐতিহ্য ও বৈশিষ্ট্যেৰ কথা, প্ৰাচীন গৌৰবেৰ কথা, স্বাৱলম্বী পূৰ্বপুৰুষেৰ মহিমাৰ কথা ভুলিতে চাহে না। পিঞ্জৰাবদ্ধ বিহগ আহত-অঙ্গ, ভগ্ন-পক্ষ লইয়া এখনও মুক্ত আকাশেৰ, হৰিৎ ক্ষেত্ৰেৰ, বনেৰ শ্যাম শোভাৰ দিকে অন্ধম বাসনাৰশে আকৃষ্ট হয়, স্বচ্ছন্দ-বিহাৰ ও অবাধ আকাশ-যাত্ৰাৰ স্বপ্ন দেখে। স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ জীৱনকথাৰ আকৰ্ষণ আজিকাৰ দিনে সেইকপ আকৰ্ষণ বলিয়া মনে হয়।

বিগত শত বৎসৰেৰ ইতিহাস বাঙ্গলাৰ পক্ষে এক চিৰস্মৰণীয়, গৌৰৱোজ্জ্বল কাহিনী। এই শতাব্দীতে বাঙ্গলাৰ জাতীয় জীৱন শতদলেৰ মত শত পাপড়ি মেলিয়া ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছে। মনীষায়, কবিত্বে, বসোধোধে, কপদক্ষতায়, স্বাদেশিকতাৰ প্ৰেৰণায়, দেশেৰ মৰ্ম্মানুসন্ধান, বাগ্মিতায়, আধ্যাত্মিকতায়, বিশ্বেৰ দৰবাৰে স্ব-মহিমাৰ বিস্তাৰে—এই শতাব্দীতে বাঙ্গলাৰ বৰেণ্য সম্ভানগণ যে প্ৰতিভা ও নিপুণতা এবং শক্তি-সামৰ্থ্যেৰ পৰিচয় দিয়াছেন তাহা বিবৃত কৰা নিশ্চয়োজন। জাতীয় জীৱনেৰ যে বিভাগে দৃষ্টিপাত কৰা যায়, সেই দিকেই বৰণীয়, স্মৰণীয় পুৰুষেৰ মুৰ্ত্তিবাজি সন্মুখে আসিয়া

দাঁড়ায় এবং বঙ্গজননী যে বঙ্গপ্রসূ তাঁহাৰ বক্ষে যে অমৃত-নিষ্যন্দ, তাহাই প্ৰমাণিত কৰে। এই বৰেণ্য সন্তান-শ্ৰেণীৰ সনকালিৰ ও মধ্যবৰ্তী হইয়াও স্যৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ বিশিষ্ট স্থান অলক্ষ্যে গিয়া পড়ে নাই। এই প্ৰতিভাৰ সন্মিলনে, এই জ্যোতিক-সত্যৰ মাঝেও তাঁহাৰ স্বাতন্ত্ৰ্য স্পষ্ট ও উজ্জ্বল নহিয়াছে। এই শতবাৰ্ষিকী সেই স্বাতন্ত্ৰ্যৰ স্বৰূপেৰ দিবে অঙ্গুলী নিৰ্দেশ কৰিতেছে। এই শতাব্দীৰ পুৰুষ-প্ৰধানগণেৰ মৰ্য্যে ভক্ত, শ্ৰেণিক, সাধৰ, যুগপ্ৰবৰ্ত্তৰ, সননুযেৰ অবতাব, মাতৃগ্ৰন্থেৰ উদ্গাতা, মাতৃভাষাৰ নিৰ্গাতা, কবিত্বেৰ নব অবতান, শিল্পবলাৰ উদ্ভাবক, বাগ্মি-শিবোমণি, বিশ্ববাণী-প্ৰচাৰক—মনীষা ও প্ৰতিভাৰ সকল ৰূপ ও প্ৰতিকাৰেৰ সাক্ষাৎ পাইয়া থাকি সত্য। ইহাদেৰ প্ৰত্যেকেই যেন এক এক বিভাগে নবদেবস্বৰূপ, এক একাটি দিক্‌পাল। ইহাদেৰ মৰ্য্যে কোন্ লোকেৰ অবিপতিকাৰে স্যৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ আসন জাতিৰ মনোমদিবে নিৰ্দিষ্ট তাহাই এ উৎসবে বিশেষভাবে স্মৰণীয়।

মনস্বী মানব সমাজে দুই শ্ৰেণীৰ লোক দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়—এক বিবেকী, অপৰ ভাবুৰ। এক শ্ৰেণী নিৰাতনিকম্প দীপেৰ মত এ সংসাৰে কল্যাণেৰ বেদীতে বিনাশ কৰেন, অপৰ শ্ৰেণী তডিভেৰ দীপ্তিতে চক্ষু ঝলসাইয়া চিত্তকে বিনুদ্ধ ও বিহ্বল কৰেন। যঁহাৰা ভাবানেশেৰ উচ্ছলতাৰ, কল্পনাৰ উন্মাদনাৰ, ত্যাগ-বৈরাগ্য-ভক্তি-প্ৰেমেৰ আত্মহাৰা প্ৰেৰণায় ভগৎকে বিন্মিত, চকিত, বিভোৰ কৰিয়া দেন—তাঁহাৰা ভাগ্যদেবীৰ বনপুত্ৰ, অসামান্য শক্তিৰ অধিকাৰী, প্ৰতিভাৰ বিগ্ৰহ—তাঁহাদেৰ কথা স্বতন্ত্ৰ। তাঁহাৰা পাণ্ডিৰ হইয়াও, মনুষ্য হইয়াও বঙ্গবান সংস্পৰ্শ হইতে যেন অন্তৰালে অবিচিহ্নিত, তাঁহাদেৰ প্ৰকৃতি অননুবৰণীয়, তাঁহাৰা দুৰ হইতে নমস্যা। বিহ অপৰ শ্ৰেণীৰ গোবৰ দুয়লোকেৰ আকস্মিক অবিতৰ্ক দানে নয়—চৰিত্ৰেৰ দূৰতায়, ঐবাচিক নিষ্ঠায়, নিবন্তৰ সদাচৰ্য্য, উদ্যম ও প্ৰযত্নেৰ একাগ্ৰতায়ও অবিচিহ্না ধানায়। স্যৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ মন্ত্ৰ এই দ্বিতীয় শ্ৰেণীৰ। প্ৰকৃতিৰ যে অসাধাৰণ দানে তিনি সম্পন্ন ও সমৃদ্ধ ছিলেন তাহাৰে নৈতিৰ প্ৰতিভা আখ্যা দেওয়া যায়। ইহাৰ প্ৰেৰণা আসে ভীৰনেৰ স্ৰষ্ণা ও সান্ধ্যস্য-বক্ষাৰ আগ্ৰহ হইতে—সামাজিক সম্পৰ্কেৰ সকল দাবী ও প্ৰয়োজন মিটাইবাৰ, সকল বৰ্ত্তব্যেৰ স্ফূৰ্ত্ত সম্পাদনেৰ নিপুণ ও অচল অভিনিবেশ হইতে। ইহা একাটি স্মৰিন্যস্ত পৰিবৰ্ত্তনৰ সমগ্ৰ জীৱনে প্ৰয়োগ ও প্ৰবাস। ফলে লোকসমক্ষে প্ৰতিভাত হয় একাটি পূৰ্ণাঙ্গ, সকল বলায় সমৃদ্ধ শিল্পীৰ বচনাৰ মত স্ৰষ্ণান্নিত অবদান। বাঙ্গালী জাতিৰ স্বাভাবিক পক্ষপাত হয়ত অপৰ শ্ৰেণীৰ দিকে, আপনভোলা, বিচাৰ-বিতৰ্ক ছাপাইয়া ভাবস্ৰোতে ভাসমান, হৃদয়াবেগেৰ প্ৰেৰণায় নিকৰ্দ্দেশ যাত্ৰী মনুষ্যত্বেৰ প্ৰতি। কিন্তু নৈতিক প্ৰতিভাৰ মৰ্য্যাদা-বোধে ও তাহাৰ প্ৰতি সন্মান-নিবেদনেও যে এ জাতিৰ আগ্ৰহ ন্যূন নহে তাহাৰ পৰিচয় সপ্তাহব্যাপী স্মৃতিপূজাৰ এই সমাবোধে, চৰিতকথা ও উপদেশবাণীৰ এই পাৰায়ণে।

নিয়তিৰ অলঙ্ঘ্য বিবানে এদেশ পাশ্চাত্য বণিক্-বেশী শাসকেৰ কবতলগত হইয়াছে—সে আজ প্ৰায় দুই শত বৎসৰ হইতে চলিল। তদবৰি আদৰ্শ, ভাবপুঞ্জ, জীৱন-পৰিকল্পনা লইয়া বিজেতা ও বিজিত, প্ৰতীচী ও প্ৰাচীৰ মৰ্য্যে একাটা প্ৰকাণ্ড সংঘৰ্ষ ও বিৰোধ চলিয়া আগিতেছে। পাশ্চাত্য প্ৰভাৱকে একেবাৰে পৰিহাৰ ও অস্বীকাৰ কৰিবাৰ প্ৰয়াস যেমন এক দিকে দেখা গিয়াছে, অপৰ দিকে সমগ্ৰভাবে, অকুণ্ঠচিত্তে তাহাতেই আত্মসমৰ্পণ কৰিবাৰ প্ৰবৃত্তিও লক্ষিত হইয়াছে। স্বাভাবিক নিয়মে প্ৰবল বিজেতাৰ সভ্যতা ও আদৰ্শ সমূহ দুৰ্বল বিজিত জাতিৰ নিকট নিবিচাবে নতশিৰে গ্ৰাহ্য শাস্ত্ৰীয় বিধানেৰ মৰ্য্যাদা পাইয়া থাকে। যে সময়ে মেকলে সাহেব যুগপৎ এদেশেৰ দণ্ডবিধি ও শিক্ষাপ্ৰণালী বাঁৰিয়া দেন, সেই সময় হইতেই পাশ্চাত্য প্ৰভাৱ এ দেশকে অভিভূত কৰিতে থাকে এবং ইহাৰ ফলে শাসক সম্প্ৰদায়েৰ সহিত সংশ্লিষ্ট ইংৰাজী-শিক্ষিত শ্ৰেণীসমূহেৰ জীৱনে কত প্ৰকাৰ বিকৃতি ও কদৰ্য্যতা দেখা দেয়, বাঙ্গলাৰ গত শতাব্দীৰ সামাজিক ইতিহাস তাহাৰ সাক্ষ্য বহন

কৰিতেছে। কিন্তু এ সৰল নিকৃতি ও উচ্ছৃঙ্খলতা পনিহান বনিয়া স্তম্ভ আয়তনভাবে যিবিয়া বাটনান ও উহা বজায় ৰাখিবান এৰাটা বিপুল থ্ৰাগাও সনাত্ত-জীবনে বনানব পনিচলিত হইয়াছে। এই সংবন্ধন-নীতিৰ মূল ও পনিচালব হইয়াছেন ব্ৰাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিত-সনাত্ত। স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ শিষ্য ও দীক্ষা সেই সংবন্ধন-মনোবৃত্তিৰ আবেষ্টনে সাৰিত হয়, এনং ফলে ইহা তাঁহান মৰ্মগত সংস্থানে পনিগত হয়। পাশ্চাত্ত্য সাহিত্য-বিজ্ঞান ও ব্যবহাৰ-শাস্ত্ৰৰ আলোচনা-অধ্যাপনা, নাজকীয় চাকুনী, সম্পদ ও বিলাসেৰ সৰল উপবৰণেৰ স্যাবেশ—থ্ৰতিপদে এ সনলেৰ নন্য দিয়া অথ্ৰসন হইলেও, স্যব গুৰুদাস তাঁহান আৰবগত সংবন্ধনী মনোবৃত্তি ও তদুপযোগী আচাৰ ও নীতিনীতি হইতে কখনও বিচ্যুত হন নাই। ইহাতে তিনি যে দৃঢ় নিষ্ঠা ও ননোবলেৰ পনিচল দিয়াছেন তাহা সত্যই স্তম্ভুৰ্ত। এ সম্বন্ধে যে সৰল বাহিনী থ্ৰচলিত আছে তাহাতে তাঁহান অবিচলিত আস্থা ও নিয়ননিষ্ঠা থ্ৰগাণিত হয়। যাঁহাবা পাশ্চাত্ত্য থ্ৰভাব দুবে বাখিয়া আয়তন বনিয়া আসিতেছেন তাঁহাদেৰ অপেশা স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ আনুষ্ঠানিক দৃঢ়তা এই বানণে অধিবৰ্তন থ্ৰশংসনীয় যে তিনি পাশ্চাত্ত্য সংস্পৰ্শেৰ থ্ৰবল শ্ৰোভেৰ মাৰো পডিয়াও অতীতবে অশ্ৰদ্ধা ববেন নাই, যে পথ পিতৃপিতামহগণ অনুসৰণ বনিয়া-ছিলেৰ তাহা হইতে বিচ্যুত হন নাই। হংস যেমন জলে নিচলণ কৰিয়াও অনাৰ্দ্ৰপশ ও অক্লিন্দ্ৰদেহ থাকে, পদ্মপত্ৰে জল থাবিলেও তাহা যেমন উহাতে সংলগ্ন না হইয়া গলিয়া পড়ে, তেনি পাশ্চাত্ত্য থ্ৰভাবে নিবৰ্তন সৰ্বদিকে বেষ্টিত হইয়াও তিনি উহা অতিক্ৰম কৰিয়া জীবনযাপন বনিয়াছিলেৰ। কালেৰ আকৰ্ষণী শক্তিৰে অস্বীকাৰ কৰিয়া নিজ বৈশিষ্ট্যে থ্ৰতিষ্ঠিত থাকায় যে কৃতিত্ব ও পৌৰুষ তাহান তিনি পৰাকাষ্ঠা দেখাইয়া গিয়াছেন। আভবিক যত্ন ও পনিপাটিৰ সহিত তিনি নিত্য সন্ধ্যা-বন্দন ও সকল পূজা-পাৰ্বণেৰ অনুষ্ঠান বৰিতেন—শুধু এই বাবণেই তাঁহাবে বাৰ্মিৰ বলা হয় না। মূলেৰ কথা ও থ্ৰকৃত মৰ্ম ইহাই যে, যে সকল কৰ্ম সম্পাদন কৰিলে লোকস্থিতিকে দৃঢ় কৰা যায়, আত্মপৰ সকল জনকে মিলিত, দুঃখমুক্ত ও সুখী কৰা যায়, সমাজকে সংহত ও জীবনকে শাস্তিময় বাখা যায়, একান্তভাবে যাবজ্জীবন তিনি তাহাবই সাধনা কৰিয়াছিলেৰ। ধাৰণাৰ্দ্ধনমিত্যাহঃ—শাস্ত্ৰেৰ ইহাই নিৰ্দেশ, ধাৰণ-কাৰ বলিয়াই ধৰ্ম এই নাম। যে সকল নবনাবী বিচাবেৰ দ্বাৰা, অনুক্ষণ থ্ৰযত্নেৰ দ্বাৰা গাৰ্হস্থ্য ও সামাজিক জীবনকে বিচিছ্ৰা ও বিশ্লিষ্ট হইতে না দিয়া সনথ্ৰকে মিলিত ও মাধুৰ্য্যেৰ সহিত সচল বাখেৰ তাঁহাবাই থ্ৰকৃত বাৰ্মিক। স্যব গুৰুদাস এই মৌলিক বাৰ্মিকতাৰ আদৰ্শ স্বৰূপ ছিলেৰ। সভাসমিতিৰ অবিবেশন শেষ হইয়া গেলেও দ্বানে দাঁড়াইয়া হাস্যমুখে অশেষ বৈৰ্য্যেৰ সহিত উপদেশ ও আলোচনায় স্তম্ভীৰ্ঘ সময় অতিবাহিত কৰিতে তাঁহাকে যাঁহাবা দেখিয়াছেন, তাঁহাবা বুঝিয়াছেন—সমাজ-যত্নেৰ অৰাৰ মঙ্গল অব্যাহত গতি ও কৰ্ম্মে স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ কতখানি দৰদ ছিল।

আজকাল অনেকেৰ মনে এই ধাৰণা থ্ৰবল হইতেছে যে সমাজেৰ হিতাৰ্থী ও লেখক বলিতে বিপ্লবীকেই বুঝায়, পুৰাতনকে বিব্ৰস্ত কৰিয়া নূতনেৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠাই থ্ৰকৃত লোক-কল্যাণ। কিন্তু বিপ্লব সাময়িক উপায় হইলেও, উহা কোনমতেই উপেয় বা গন্তব্য হইতে পাৰে না, কিছুদিনেৰ জন্য পথ হিসাবে অবলম্বনীয় হইলেও উহা বিশ্ৰান্তিস্থল বা চৰিতাৰ্থ তাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰ নহে। বাৰণ গতিও যেমন জীবনেৰ ধৰ্ম্ম, স্থিতি তাহা হইতে কোন অংশে ন্যূন নহে। দীৰ্ঘকাল-পুঞ্জীভূত অন্যায় ও আৰ্জনাৰ ভাব বহিয়া জডভাবে অবস্থিতি যেমন সমাজেৰ ক্ষতিকৰ, তেনি থ্ৰকৃত থ্ৰযোজনেৰ প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য না বাখিয়া নিবৰ্তন গতিৰ পৰিপোষকতাও সমাজেৰ অনিষ্টেৰ কাৰণ। যে আৰ্জনেৰ ও ক্ৰিয়াৰ ফলে যত্নেৰ অংশসকল বিচিছ্ৰা হইয়া দশদিকে উডিয়া যায়, তাহাতে যত্নেৰ অবসানই ঘটে। তাই মনুষ্যসমাজে কতকগুলি অদৃশ্য অথচ অত্যাৱশ্যক বন্ধনেৰ থ্ৰযোজন—এই গুণগুলি সমাজ-বথকে টানিয়া লইয়া যাইতে না পাৰে, কিন্তু ভাঙ্গিয়া পড়িতে দেয় না। এই গুণগুলিৰ

সনাতনকেই শাস্ত্রে সনাতন ধর্ম বলা হইয়াছে। যথা—সত্য ও দান, তপস্যা ও শৌচ, সন্তোষ ও মনোজ্ঞা, ক্ষমা ও সর্বলতা, জ্ঞান ও শন, দয়া ও ধ্যান। এইগুলিই ধর্মের শাস্ত্রত নৈতিক উপাদান। আবার জন্মের সঙ্গে মানুষ ত্রিবিধ ধ্বংসে ধ্বংসী হয়—সন্ততি-বশ্য পিতৃধ্বংস, ব্যান-পুত্রাদি দ্বারা দেবধ্বংস এবং বিদ্যার্জন ও উহার বিস্তারের দ্বারা ঋষিধ্বংস হইতে মুক্তিলাভ ঘটে। নৃযজ্ঞ বা অতিথি-পূজা ও ভতবজ্ঞ বা ইতর প্রাণীকে অনুদান ও মানুষের কর্তব্য। তাই গৃহস্থের নিত্য কর্তব্য—পঞ্চ মহাযজ্ঞের অনুষ্ঠান। জীবনের পূর্ণতা ও কৃতার্থতার জন্য ভাবতের পূনাগী প্রভৃতি এই সবল বিন্যাস করিয়াছেন। তাই এগুলির যথাযথ পালনে সত্য গুরুদাস আদর্শস্বরূপ ছিলেন। গুরুজন-প্রদত্ত তাঁহার গুরুদাস নাম একান্তভাবে সার্থক হইয়াছিল। হিন্দুর দৃষ্টিতে সনাতন ধর্মাদি ইহাই যে ‘নাস্তি নাত্মনো গুরু’। সত্য গুরুদাসের সাতভক্তি প্রসিদ্ধ ও বহু ঘটনাতে প্রমাণিত হইয়াছিল। অন্যাপদের সম্মান-বশ্য ও তাঁহার আচরণে পবিত্র হইত। প্রেসিডেন্সি বনেজে ছাত্রাবস্থায় তিনি বিখ্যাত পণ্ডিত কৃষ্ণদত্ত ভট্টাচার্যের নিবর্তি বাক্যে গাঢ়তা পাঠ করেন। ভট্টাচার্য মহাশয় ছিলেন প্রভূতশ্রদ্ধা, বোম্বেতে মতানুযায়ী Positivist। সামাজিক আচরণ-ব্যবহারেও তিনি নির্ভীক, অবপটে ও সময়ে সময়ে বিসদৃশভাবে নিজ মতের পরিচয় দিতেন। এ দিকে সত্য গুরুদাস ছিলেন আন্তরিক ও নিষ্ঠাবান প্রাচীনানুগ অনুষ্ঠানিক। কিন্তু তথাপি নিজ অন্যাপদের সহিত সাক্ষাৎ হইলে তিনি অতি বিনীত ভাবে প্রশ্ন ও পদবলি গ্রহণে অন্যথা করেন নাই। সর্বোপরি যে সম্প্রদায়, যে নৈতি ও আধ্যাত্মিক পরিবেশের মধ্যে তিনি বহুত ও পবিত্র হইয়াছিলেন, সেট সম্প্রদায়ের সংরক্ষণ—আধ্যাত্মিকতা—পবন গুরুগণের প্রতি তাঁহার অপরিণীত আস্থা ছিল। তিনি অসংশয়িতচিত্তে তাঁহাদের বিধান পালন করিতেন। এজন্য তিনি সবল প্রবাস অস্ববিধা ও অস্বচ্ছন্দ্য তুচ্ছ করিতেন। এই প্রাচীন-গণের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা, শাস্ত্রীয় মতবাদের অনুসরণ তাঁহার জীবনে প্রবর্তনাস্বরূপ ছিল। এ দিকাবেও সত্যই তিনি ছিলেন গুরুদাস। তাঁহার জীবনের একটা গৌরবময় ঘটনা এই প্রসঙ্গে মনে পড়ে। তখন তিনি হাইকোর্টের বিচারক-পদে অধিষ্ঠিত। দুইদিন দিন দুই-প্রহরে গঙ্গাস্নান করিয়া ফিরিতেছেন। এমন সময়ে এক বৃদ্ধা তাঁহাকে পথে দেখিতে পাইয়া নিতান্ত ব্যাবলভাবে বলিল—“মহাশয় প্রাণ অতীত হইতে চলিল, অথচ বাটীতে গৃহদেবতা শালগ্রামের পূজা হয় নাই। বাবা, তোমাকে দেখিয়া নিষ্ঠাবান ব্রাহ্মণ বলিয়া মনে হইতেছে। যদি দয়া করিয়া আমার ঠাকুর পূজাটি করিয়া দাও ত বড় উপকার হয়। নহিলে ঠাকুরের সঙ্গে গৃহস্থের ও উপবাসী থাকিতে হইবে।” দ্বিকাক্তি না করিয়া গুরুদাস বৃদ্ধার অনুবোধ বশ্য করিলেন, এবং পূজাতে বৃদ্ধার অনুবোধ এড়াইতে না পারিয়া নৈবেদ্যের যৎসামান্য সামগ্রী গামছায় বাঁধিয়া লইয়া গৃহে ফিরিলেন। বৃদ্ধার বাটী হইতে বাহির হইবার সময়ে তাহার এক প্রতিবেশিনী তাঁহাকে চিনিতে পারিয়া বলিল—“উনি যে হাইকোর্টের জজ—ওঁকে দিয়া পূজা কবাইয়া লইলে? উনি যে অসন্তুষ্ট হইতে পারেন।” বৃদ্ধা অপ্রস্তুত ও শঙ্কিত হইয়া পবদিন তাঁহার বাটীতে উপস্থিত হইয়া অপবাদ হইয়াছে বলিয়া ক্ষমা প্রার্থনা করিল। গুরুদাস অতি মিষ্টভাবে তাহাকে আশ্বস্ত করিয়া বলিলেন—“কৈ, অন্যায় ত কিছু কব নাই? ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তানকে দিয়া পূজা কবাইলে কি অপবাদ হয়?”

অজ্ঞাতানুগী সেই বৃদ্ধা কালক্রমে কোথায় মিলাইয়া গিয়াছে। সত্য গুরুদাসও মরদেহে আর এ জগতে নাই। কিন্তু যে আকুলতায় সেই মধ্যাহ্নে নিকপায় হইয়া ঐ বৃদ্ধা পথের ধারে অপরিচিত ব্রাহ্মণকে পূজা করিতে ডাকিয়া লয়, সে ব্যাকুলতা হিন্দুসমাজের আন্তরিক্যবুদ্ধিবৈ প্রতিচ্ছবি। এবং সর্বোচ্চ আদালতের বিচারপতি পাশ্চাত্য-শিক্ষায় পাবদর্শী সেদিনকার গুরুদাস ভাবতের বর্তমান ও ভাবী বংশধরগণের প্রতিনিধি। আজিকার দিনে এই প্রশ্ন জাগে যে, আমাদের উত্তরাধিকারী সন্তান-পবম্পরায় তাঁহার এই অমূল্য শ্রদ্ধাবুদ্ধি বজায় থাকিবে কিনা, ভাবতের সনাতন আন্তরিক্য

ও শ্রদ্ধাভক্তি—যাহা তিনি নানা প্রতিবুল ঘটনাব ও ভাবস্রোতেন ন্যে নশ। বনিত পানিগাছিলে
তাহা—অতি আধুনিক মনোবৃত্তিৰ আলোডনে ভাসিয়া তলাইয়া বাইনে দি না ।

আচাৰ, অনুষ্ঠান, গানাজিৰ ব্যবহাৰ, ধৰ্ম্মনত প্রভৃতি বিষয়ে তিনি অতীত ও বৰ্ত্তমানেন দৰ্শন
যে গানগ্ৰন্য কৰিয়া লইয়াছিলে এবং জীবনে পালন কৰিয়াছিলে, তাহাি যে বৰ্ত্তমান যুগ-সনগ্ৰন্য
চৰন ও স্থায়ী সমাধান বলিয়া স্বীকৃত ও অনুসৃত হইনে ইহা সন্দৰ নহে । কালেন অগ্রগতিৰ সন্ম
অবস্থাৰ এতদূৰ বিপর্যয় হইয়াছে যে এই সমাধানেন ও সংদান না হইনা পানে না । বিহস্যন ওকদাসেন
জীবনী হইতে যে শিক্ষা ও উপদেশ পাই তাহা তাঁহান দাৰ্শনিক আশনিক অনুবৰণ নহে । দান
ব্যক্তি ও পৰিবেশ উভয়ই নিবন্তন পৰিবৰ্ত্তিত হইতেছে । বিহ তিনি যে সনল উচচবৃত্তি ও মহনী
গুণেন আকৰ ছিলেন সেওলিৰ মূল্য অপনিসীম—সেওলিৰ আদৰ্শ্যবতা চিনদিনই থানিবে—
যতদিন সভ্যতাৰ সন্ম এতাবৎকাল-পৰিপোমিত ধানণা নূত স্পৰ্দ্ধাভনে গানগ পনিত্যাগ না কৰে ।
গানাজিৰ দাবী ও দাৰিদ্ৰ, ব্যক্তিৰ অধিৰাণ ও বৰ্ত্তব্য—এসবল যে দীন-শান্ততানে নিৰুপণীয়, বিবেচন
নির্দেশ যে শিবোৰ্ণাৰ্য্য, নীতি ও ধৰ্ম্মেন মৌলিৰ উপাদানওলি যে গানগিক প্রযোজনবশে বহিত নহে,
সেওলি যে শাস্ত, মনুষ্য-জীবনেন উপর দৈব-প্ৰেৰণাৰ আশিষনা—বিশেষতঃ সেওলি যে ভাবভে
আৰ্য্য মনোবৃত্তিৰ অমূল্য অবদান—গ্যন ওকদাসেন চনিতবধা ও উপদেশাবলী তাহাি নিবন্তন সন
কবাইয়া দেব ।

প্রাতিঃস্মরণীয় গুরুদাস

শ্রীমবেজনাথ শেঠ

গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় বাদলাৰ ইংৰাজী শিসিত গনাছেৰ একজন সৰ্বজনমান্য দেশ-
নাযক ছিলেন । আনাৰ অতি বড সোভাগ্য হইয়াছিল—তাঁহান সহিত মেলানেশা ঘটয়াছিল । যদি
কেহ আমায় জিজ্ঞাসা কৰেন তৰে এৰ কথাৰ বলিৰ তাহাৰ চিবস্মনগীয় হইবাৰ প্রবান লক্ষণ তিনি
চৰিত্ৰবলে, ব্যবহাবে, বিশ্বাসে দেখাটয়া গিয়াছেন, মানবজীবনে হিন্দু আদৰ্শ সম্পূৰ্ণভাবে বজায়
ৰাখিয়া যে কোনও জাতিৰ যে কোনও লোৰেৰ শ্রদ্ধা অৰ্জন কৰা যায় । তাঁহাৰ পুণ্য জীবনেন
আলোচনা কৰিলে পুণ্য হয়, সেই লোভে তাঁহাৰ কথা স্মৃতিপথে আনয়ন কৰিতেছি । আমাদেব
হিন্দুৰ বিশ্বাস—‘পুত্রে বশসি তোযে চ নবাণাং পুণ্যলক্ষণম্’ । তাঁহাৰ উচচ পদ অপেক্ষা তাঁহাৰ
চৰিত্ৰেৰ যশঃসৌভ ভাবতবাসীকে চিবকাল মুগ্ধ ৰাখিবে । আৰ তাঁহাৰ চৰিত্ৰবান্ পুত্ৰগণ তাঁহাৰ
পুণ্যেৰ অৰিসংবাদিত নিদৰ্শন । সোভাগ্যক্ৰমে তাঁহাৰ মৰ্য্যম পুত্ৰ শবচচদেব অগ্রজতুল্য স্নেহ লাভ
কৰিয়া তাঁহাৰ অগাধ বিদ্যাবত্তায়, অবিচলিত নিষ্ঠায়, অকুণ্ঠিত শাস্ত্ৰশ্রদ্ধায় ও লোকোত্তৰ নীতিশীলতায়
যে মানবতাৰ আদৰ্শ দেখিয়াছি, তাহাতে পিতৃপুণ্যেৰ নিৰ্ঘ্যাস যেন উপভোগ কৰিয়াছি ।

গুরুদাস বাবু কঠোৰ দাবিদ্রোব সহিত সংগ্ৰাম কৰিয়া বিদ্যার্জন কৰিয়াছিলেন । তিল তিল
কৰিয়া তাঁহাৰ সদ্গুণাবলী ফুটিয়া উঠিয়াছিল । তিনি বহবমপুৰে ওকালতি আৰম্ভ কৰেন । গুরুদাস
বাবু যখন বহবমপুৰে, তখন বন্ধিমচন্দ্র তথায় ডেপুটি হাকিম । নিশ্চয় বলিতে পাৰি, গুরুদাস বাবুৰ
আদৰ্শ চৰিত্ৰেৰ তেজ বন্ধিমবাবুকে বঙাইয়া তুলিয়াছিল ।

ইংৰাজী ১৮৮৯ সালে আমাদেব পাডায় চৈতন্য লাইব্ৰেৰীৰ প্রতিষ্ঠা হয় । চৈতন্য লাইব্ৰেৰী
স্থানীয় যুবকদেব বিদ্যালোচনাৰ একটী কেন্দ্ৰ হয় । তৎপূৰ্বে বাগবাজাবে একটী পুস্তকালয়ে একপ
একটী কেন্দ্ৰ ছিল ও বহুবাজাবে সাবিত্ৰী লাইব্ৰেৰী একপ একটী ছিল । গুরুদাসবাবু এইকপ আলোচনা-

কেৱেৰ বিশেষ উৎসাহদাতা ছিলেন। আমবা গুৰুদাসবাবুকে ঐকপ আলোচনা-সভায় ষণ্টাব পৰ ষণ্টা যোগদান কৰিয়া ও আলোচ্য বিষয়েৰ তথ্য বুঝাইয়া কালযাপন কৰিতে দেখিয়াছি। হেদুয়াৰ পূৰ্বে কলেজেৰ তখনকাৰ নাম ছিল জেনাবেল এসেমব্লি। উহাবই মধ্যস্থলে এক সভা-সংস্থানেৰ হল ছিল। সেই হলে চৈতন্য লাইব্ৰেৰীৰ অনেক সভা হয়। গুৰুদাসবাবু শ্ৰদ্ধেয় দ্বিজেন্দ্ৰনাথ ঠাকুৰ মহাশয়েৰ “আৰ্য্যামি ও সাহেবিয়ানা” প্ৰবন্ধেৰ পাঠ-সভায় সভাপতি ছিলেন। তৎপৰে বৰীজনাথেৰ “যুৰোপ যাত্ৰীৰ ডাৰাবী” পঠনেৰ সভায় সভাপতি হন। বজনীকাত গুপ্ত মহাশয় ব্যাখ্যা কৰেন “হিন্দুৰ আশ্ৰম চতুষ্টয়”। এই প্ৰবন্ধ পঠিত হইবাৰ পৰ গুৰুদাসবাবু ঐতিহাসিককে গভীৰ শ্ৰদ্ধা নিবেদন কৰেন। দ্বিজেন্দ্ৰনাথ ঠাকুৰ মহাশয় “অদ্বৈতমতেৰ সমালোচনা” ঐ হলেই কৰেন। সভাপতিৰ উপসংহাৰে গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ নিকট আমবা প্ৰথম শুনি—“অদ্বৈতানুভবধিণী” গীতাৰ পৰিচয়। বন্ধিমবাবুৰ পৰলোকযাত্ৰাৰ পৰেই ঠাব বঙ্গমণ্ডে চৈতন্য লাইব্ৰেৰী যে স্মৃতিসভাৰ আয়োজন কৰে, গুৰুদাসবাবু সেই সভাৰ সভাপতি ছিলেন। মিনাৰ্তা থিয়েটাৰে বৰীজনাথ “নেয়েলি ছা” লইয়া যে প্ৰবন্ধ পাঠ কৰেন তাহাতে গুৰুদাসবাবু সভাপতি হইয়া যে আনন্দ প্ৰকাশ কৰেন সে আনন্দ তাঁহাৰ শিশুস্থলত সবলতাৰ প্ৰতিবেনি। তৎপূৰ্বেই গোলদীঘিৰ স্কুলে ভাৰতীয় যুৱকদেৰ উচ্চতৰ শিক্ষাৰ জন্য সভা (Society for the Higher Training of Young Men) প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত হইয়াছিল। সেই সভাবই অল্লদিন পৰেই Calcutta University Institute নামকৰণ হয়। গুৰুদাসবাবু সেই সভাৰ আদি হইতে যুৱকদেৰ সকল কাৰ্য্যে উৎসাহদাতা ছিলেন। গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ সকল উৎসাহেৰ মূলনীতি ছিল—মানবতাৰ সৰ্ব্বশ্ৰেষ্ঠ আদৰ্শকে বজায় ৰাখিবাৰ চেষ্টা। তথায় প্ৰথম নাটকাতিনয় হয়—মেঘনাদবধ। তথায় একদিন কবিবৰ নবীন সেন, গুৰুদাসবাবু, বিনয়েন্দ্ৰবাবু প্ৰভৃতি বৈঠক কৰিতেছিল। আমবা বলি—আবৃত্তি-প্ৰতিযোগিতাৰ কথা। গুৰুদাস বাবু খুবই উৎসাহ প্ৰকাশ কৰিলেন। আমাৰ সতীৰ্থ শ্ৰীমান্ নবেন্দ্ৰ চক্ৰবৰ্তী তৎক্ষণাৎ প্ৰকাশ কৰেন—শিৰাপবাৰ-ভঞ্জন-স্তোত্ৰ আবৃত্তি কৰিব। আৰ একজন টেনিসনেৰ একটা কবিতা, মনে পড়ে Enoch Arden, আবৃত্তি কৰিতে চায়। আমায় আদেশ হইল আৰ ষণ্টা সময় পৰে বৰীজনাথেৰ “ব্যথ সাবনা” অভ্যাস কৰিয়া আবৃত্তি কৰিতে হইবে। উহাবা সকলেই আধ ষণ্টা পৰে আবৃত্তি শুনিলেন। সেই অৰবি আবৃত্তি-প্ৰতিযোগিতা চলিয়া আসিতেছে। জ্ঞানবন্ধ গুৰুদাস বাবু ভবিষ্যৎ দৃষ্টিযোগে আমাৰ ভবিষ্যৎ দেখিয়াই কি আমায় অভ্যাস কৰাইলেন? না বলিব কি কৰিয়া। জগৎ-বহস্যেৰ কতটুকুই বা সাৰা জীৱনে ধৰিতে পাৰিয়াছি। তাই আজও আমাৰ সেই অভ্যস্ত কবিতাৰ প্ৰথম দুই লাইন মনে আছে—

দেবি অনেক ভক্ত এসেছে তোমাৰ চৰণতলে অনেক অৰ্য্য আনি
আমি অভাগ্য এনেছি বহিয়া নয়নজলে ব্যথ সাধনখানি।

গুৰুদাস বাবু সকল যুৱককে “আপনি” বলিয়া সম্বোধন কৰিতেন। আমবা অনেকেই আপত্তি কৰিতাম। আমবা জন ২।৩ একদিন যখন বলি আমাদেৰ অমন কৰে দূৰে ৰাখেন কেন? তখন বলেন—আচ্ছা, তোমাদেৰ “তুমি” বলিব। এই সহৃদয়তাৰ অভাৱ কোনও দিনই হয় নাই। ১৯০১ সালে একদিন যশিডি হইতে প্যাসেঞ্জাৰে আসিয়া মধুপুৰ প্লাটফৰ্মে নামিয়াই দেখি ফাৰ্ষ্ট ক্লাস বিৰামাগাৰেৰ দ্বাৰদেশে চোগা চাপকান পৰিয়া গুৰুদাস বাবু দাঁড়াইয়া। আমায় তৎক্ষণাৎ আহ্বান কৰিলেন। আমি পিতাঠাকুৰকে যশিডিতে ৰাখিয়া ফিৰিতেছিলাম। অগ্ৰে তাঁহাৰ সংবাদ লইলেন। তাহাৰ পৰে প্ৰায় ৪০ মিনিট ধৰিয়া Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Jamesএৰ গবেষণাৰ কথা তাঁহাৰ অতুলনীয় সবল ভাষায় ব্যাখ্যা কৰিয়া

আমায় বুঝাইতে লাগিলেন। আমি প্লটফিল্ডে দাঁড়াইয়া, উনি দবজাব আডালে দাঁড়াইয়া। পবেৰ ঘটনাটি আৰও মনোবম। হঠাৎ গিৰিডিৰ গাড়ী হইতে নামিয়া বিপিনবিহাৰী গুপ্ত ডাক দিলেন—“ওবে নবেন, ওখানে কি কৰচিস্, আমাব মালগুলো দেখ্ তো।” আমাদেৰ প্ৰেসিডেন্সি কলেজেৰ অধ্যাপক বিপিন গুপ্ত। বিপিনবাবু গুৰুদাসবাবুকে দেখিতে পান নাই। নিকটে আসিয়া তাঁহাকে প্ৰণাম কৰিবামাত্ৰই গুৰুদাসবাবু যে গভীৰ গবেষণাৰ পৰিচয় দিতেছিলেন তাহা বন্ধ কৰিয়া আমায় আদেশ কৰিলেন—“যাও, মাষ্টাৰ মশাইএৰ জিনিষ দেখগে।” কৰ্তব্য সৰ্বাণ্ণে, সে শিক্ষা আচৰণে শিখাইলেন।

এই যে কৰ্তব্যপৰায়ণতাৰ পথ, তাহা হইতে গুৰুদাসবাবু কোনও দিনই বিচ্যুত হন নাই। ইং ১৮৯৮ সালে সাবিত্ৰী লাইব্ৰেৰীতে ৮ চন্দ্ৰনাথ বসু “কঃ পহাঃ” শীৰ্ষক একটা প্ৰবন্ধ পাঠ কৰেন। সেই সভা আৰম্ভ হয় বেলা ৫।। টায়, চলে বাত্ৰি ১০ দশটা পৰ্য্যন্ত। তাঁহাৰ উপসংহাৰে তিনি “মহাজন” কথাৰ অৰ্থে মতভেদ স্বীকাৰ কৰিলেও তাঁহাৰ সহিত বক্তাৰ ঐকমত্য প্ৰকাশ কৰেন। যিনি তাঁহাৰ পুস্তকে লিখিয়াছেন—“জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম উভয়েবই চৰম লক্ষ্য পৰমার্থ লাভ,” যিনি প্ৰবৃত্তিমুখী ও নিবৃত্তিমুখী, প্ৰয়োমার্গমুখী ও শ্ৰেয়োমার্গমুখী ইচ্ছাৰ এই দ্বিবিধ ভেদ স্বীকাৰ কৰেন, তিনি ‘কঃ পহাঃ’ৰ কি মীমাংসা কৰিবেন তাহা বুঝিতে বিলম্ব হয় না।

অগ্নদিন পৰে কৰ্জন সাহেব বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কমিশনে গুৰুদাসবাবুকে একজন সদস্য মনোনীত কৰেন। গুৰুদাসেৰ কৰ্তব্যপৰায়ণতাৰ উজ্জ্বল দৃষ্টান্ত—ঐ কমিশনেৰ সিদ্ধান্তে তাঁহাৰ স্বকীয় ভিন্ন মতেৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা। তাহা আজও বৰ্ত্তমান। প্ৰত্যেক সত্যসন্ধিস্থ তাঁহাৰ note of dissent পাঠ কৰিলেই বুঝিতে পাবিবেন। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ প্ৰতি প্ৰত্যেক শ্ৰদ্ধালু ব্যক্তি ঐ সন্ধিক্ষণে গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ সত্যানুবাগ ও দেশানুবাগেৰ পৰিচয় লাভ কৰিতে পাবেন।

তিনি শিক্ষকতা কৰিতেন এবং বক্তৃতাৰ সন্মুখে তাঁহাৰ শিক্ষকত্ব বাহিৰ হইত সন্দেহ নাই। কিন্তু একপ সবস শিক্ষকতায় যে মুগ্ধ না হইত সে অতি বড় দুৰ্ভাগ্য। এই সবসতাৰ ভিতৰ তিনি সৰ্বদাই নিজেৰেও শিক্ষার্থী ভাবিতেন। তিনি সৰ্বদাই বিশ্বাস কৰিতেন—

সংসাৰবিষবৃক্ষস্য হে এব মধুবে ফলে।

কাব্যামৃতবাসাস্বাদঃ সঙ্গমঃ সজ্জনৈঃ সহ ॥

অৰ্থাৎ ভাবেৰ আদান-প্ৰদানেই জীৱনেৰ অমৃতময় বস। সেইজন্য বক্ষিসবাবু যেদিন “বৈদিক সাহিত্য” সন্ধন্ধে বক্তৃতা দেন, সেদিন গুৰুদাস বাবু শ্ৰোতা। আমাৰ মনে আছে, যখনই বাসবিহাৰী ঘোষেৰ নাম হইত, তিনি কি উচ্ছ্বসিত কৰ্ঠে বাসবিহাৰী বাবুৰ আইনতত্ত্ব-জ্ঞান ও সাহিত্য-বসবোধেৰ স্মৃতি কৰিতেন। ১৮৯৯ খৃষ্টাব্দে একদিন গুৰুদাসবাবু ও ম্যাকফাৰ্সন, সাহেবেৰ এজলাসে বাসবিহাৰীবাবু এক সদৰ দেওয়ানি আমলেৰ নজীৱ দেখান। শ্ৰদ্ধেয় সাবদা মিত্ৰ মহাশয় অপৰ পক্ষেৰ তৰফে আপত্তি কৰেন ‘antiquated ruling’—অৰ্থাৎ বস্তাপচা নজীৱ। প্ৰলোভন—চিহ্নটি কাটা। বাসবিহাৰীবাবু এক ভীষণ কটাক্ষপাত কৰিয়া সাবদাবাবুকে স্তম্ভ কৰাইলেন। গুৰুদাসবাবু সাবদাবাবুৰ চিহ্নটি কাটাৰ উদ্দেশ্যে সহানুভূতি দেখাইলেন। বাসবিহাৰীবাবুকে বলিলেন—“আপনাৰ অপৰ পক্ষেৰ বিদ্বান্ প্ৰতিদ্বন্দ্বীৰ আপত্তিতে কি বলিবাব আছে? তখন বাসবিহাৰীবাবুৰ মাথাৰ টনক নডিল। বেলা এটা তখনও বাজে নাই। মক্কেলেৰ কাগজপত্ৰ পড়িয়া বহিল। আগ্লেয়গিৰিৰ অগ্নিশ্ৰাব-প্ৰবাহ বহিতে লাগিল। নজীৱ কাহাকে বলে, সূত্ৰ কাহাকে বলে, সিদ্ধান্ত কাহাকে বলে, নূতনত্ব ও পুৰাতনত্বেৰ ভেদ কেন আসে, কেন কোথায় থাকা উচিত নয়, এই সমস্ত গভীৰ তত্ত্বকথা-সাহিত্য, আইন-তত্ত্ব, অসংখ্য চান্সেলৰেৰ উজ্জি ও ঘটনাবলী

ও অসংখ্য মামলাৰ বুদ্ধিতৰ্ক দ্বাৰা বুঝাইয়া বলিয়া যাইতে লাগিলেন। কোনও কিছু কোনও উপস্থিত পুস্তকেৰ পত্ৰাক হইতে বাহিৰ কবিলেন না, সমস্তই তাঁহাৰ অপূৰ্ব মেৰা ও স্মৃতিশক্তিৰ সাহায্যে প্ৰসুৰণেৰ মত বাহিৰ হইতে লাগিল। উভয় পক্ষৰ মক্কেল কে কি বুঝিল জানি না। কিন্তু উপস্থিত উকিলগণলী, বিপক্ষেৰ উকিল সাবদা বাবু এবং দুইজন জজ স্তম্ভিত হইয়া ঐ বাক্ত্যোতে পুণ্যস্মান কৰিতে লাগিলেন। আমি তখন সবেমাত্ৰ আদালতেৰ শ্ৰোতা। কি যে শুনিয়াছি তাহাৰ বৰ্ণনা আঁহাৰ সাধ্যাতীত। তবে যখন ৪১। টাৰ পৰ আদালত ভাঙ্গিল, তখন প্ৰত্যেক শ্ৰোতাই শ্ৰদ্ধাবনত, এবং দুইজন জজই মুগ্ধ।

গুৰুদাস বাবু নীতিশিক্ষাৰ খাতিৰে কোনও মতবাদেৰ বিৰোধ কৰিতে দ্বিধা বঞ্জনও কৰেন নাই। শুনিয়াছি একদিন জজ নবিশ ৪১। টাৰ পৰ গুৰুদাস বাবুকে বলেন—Brother Banerji, these young men (ট্ৰান হইতে যাহাৰা ভিড কৰিয়া খেলা দেখিতে আসিতেছিল) will be the future hopes of your country. গুৰুদাস বাবু বলেন— I am not sure, দাঁড়াইয়া নবিশ সাহেব তৰ্ক ছুড়িয়া দেন—“ কেন তুমি অবিশ্বাস কৰ ?” অনেকক্ষণ আলোচনা হয়। অবশেষে গুৰুদাস বাবু বলেন—I do not think mere excitement without responsibility can build up character It cannot. নবিশ সাহেব ৭ দিন পৰে গুৰুদাস বাবুকে বলেন—Dr. Banerji, your last words made me think all these days I think you are right

গুৰুদাস বাবু অগ্ৰিম সত্যভাষণেৰ বিৰোধী ছিলেন। কিন্তু অন্যায়েৰ বিৰুদ্ধে যাহা বলিবাৰ বা কৰিবাৰ তাহা হইতে বিচ্যুত হইতেন না। ভূদেব বাবুৰ “পাবিবাৰিৰ প্ৰবন্ধ” হইতে নিৰ্ব্বাচিত “বাল্য বিবাহ” প্ৰবন্ধ পাঠ্যপুস্তক হইতে উঠাইয়া দেওয়া তিনি কোনও দিন মাজনা কৰেন নাই। থিয়েটাৰ দেখাৰ তিনি বিৰোধী ছিলেন না, কেন না তাহা বলাবিদ্যা-চৰ্চা। গিৰিশচন্দ্ৰেৰ ম্যাকবেথেৰ অনুবাদ তিনি উচ্চ প্ৰশংসা কৰিয়াছেন। নবীন সেনেৰ সবল কবিতাবলীৰ গুণমুগ্ধ ছিলেন। নিজেৰ আদালতে পুত্ৰ বা জামাতাৰ ওকালতি পছন্দ কৰিতেন না।

তিনি তাঁহাৰ বচিত “জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম” গ্ৰন্থে তাঁহাৰ সমীচীন অভিজ্ঞতালব্ধ মতসমূহ লিখিয়া রাখিয়া গিয়াছেন। নিম্নলিখিত সিদ্ধান্তগুলি স্মৰণীয়—

পৃঃ ২। জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম উভয়েৰই চৰম লক্ষ্য পৰমার্থ-লাভ।

৭। কোন শব্দ সংস্কৃত ভাষাৰ যে অৰ্থে ব্যবহৃত তাহা হইতে ভিন্ন অৰ্থে বদ্ধ ভাষাৰ সেই শব্দ ব্যবহৃত হওয়া বুদ্ধিসিদ্ধ হয় না।

১৩। জ্ঞান জ্ঞাতাৰ অবস্থান্তৰ।

১৮। জ্ঞাতা বা আসা সীমাবদ্ধ দেহ হইতে উদ্ধৃত নহে, অনন্ত চৈতন্য উৎপন্ন।

৭৫। ইহাৰ দুই ভাগ—প্ৰবৃত্তিমুখী ও নিবৃত্তিমুখী, প্ৰেযোগাৰ্গমুখী ও শ্ৰেযোগাৰ্গমুখী।

১৩০। ‘অনাবোগ্যমনায়ুষ্মস্বৰ্গ্যাতিভোজনম্।

অপুণ্যং লোকবিদ্বিষ্টং তস্মাৎ তৎ পৰিবৰ্জয়েৎ॥”

১৩২। নিদ্ৰা ও বিশ্রাম নিতান্ত প্ৰয়োজনীয়।

১৩৩। বিশ্রামেৰ অৰ্থ আলস্য নহে।

১৪৮। জ্ঞান অপেক্ষা কৰ্ম কঠিন। জ্ঞানকে কাৰ্য্যে পৰিণত কৰিতে অনেক দিনেৰ অভ্যাস আবশ্যিক।

১৪৯। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতে ব্ৰাহ্মণেৰ শিক্ষাই আদৰ্শ শিক্ষা বলিয়া গণ্য হইত। সে শিক্ষাৰ উদ্দেশ্য শিক্ষাৰ্থীৰ হৃদয়ে ধৰ্ম্মভাৰেৰ উদ্বেক ও তাহাৰ ব্ৰহ্মজ্ঞান-লাভ।

পৃ. ১৭২। শিক্ষার্থীর আত্মসংযম আবশ্যিক।

২১৬। উচ্চাদর্শের স্বপ্ন তাহা হইবেই বলা যায় যাহা শরীর বা অন্যের অনিষ্টকর নহে।

২৪৯। নিবৃত্তিগার্গানুসানিতা অবিরত নির্ভরযোগ্য।

২৮৭। যুক্তি অপেক্ষা দৃষ্টান্ত প্রবলতর প্রমাণ।

৩২৬। পুত্র-কন্যার নীতি-শিক্ষার্থ পিতামাতার প্রশ্নে বর্জ্য দৃষ্টান্ত-স্বরূপে পবিত্রভাবে নিজ নিজ জীবন-যাত্রা-নির্বাহ।

৩৫৪। বিবাহ ও আহার বাদ দিয়া সমস্তের সহিত আত্মীয়তা-স্থাপন বর্জ্য।

৪৪৯। অর্থগত জাতিভেদ যতদূর নর্যবেদনাব্যবধান ছাড়া জন-জন্মগত জাতিভেদ ততদূর হয় না।

! : বিবাহ ও আহার-সদৃশ জাতিভেদ হিন্দুকে অনশ্যই মানিতে হইবে।

গুরুদাস বাবু হিন্দু আদর্শ তাঁহার পক্ষে বিচলিত নলিনীকান্ত চট্টোপাধ্যায় ও দিগদন চট্টোপাধ্যায় মান্য কবিয়া চলিতেন ও তাঁহানই ন্যায় আচরণনিষ্ঠ ছিলেন। কিন্তু তাঁহান ন্যায় লোক-প্রিয় তাঁহারা হইতে পারেন নাই। হিন্দু আদর্শ জীবনপথে লোকপ্রিয়তান অভাব হয় না—ইহাই গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের জীবন-প্রদীপের চিত্রসমুচ্ছল আভা। বাদ্রানীর তথা ভাবতবাসীর কল্যাণার্থ তাহা ভাস্কর থাকুক।

সমাজ ও মার গুরুদাস

শ্রীগণপতি সবকার

একটা থাকা জাগতিক বীতি নহে। তাহা কলে দলবদ্ধ হইয়া জীবের বাস। তাহা হইতেই জগতের শ্রেষ্ঠ জীব মানবের সমাজ-সৃষ্টি। প্রাণীবাই যে শুধু সদ ব্যতীত থাকিতে চাহে না, থাকিতে পারে না, তাহা নহে, জড় জগতেরও এই একই বীতি। বাসাবনিব পদার্থ তো জড়, কিন্তু সেখানে কি দেখি, যে বস্তুটি পবমাণু অবস্থায় (atomic condition) যতক্ষণ থাকে ততক্ষণ সে চঞ্চল ও সঙ্গী খোঁজে, কিন্তু যেই ঐ পবমাণু (atom) অন্য একটি পবমাণুর সহিত মিলিল তখনই অণু (molecule) প্রাপ্তি হয়, এই অবস্থান্তরিত হইবামাত্রই পবমাণুর চঞ্চলতা লোপ পায় এবং নিশ্চল হইয়া শান্তিতে থাকে। সৃষ্টির মূল নীতিই এই দ্বন্দ্ব। একগোঁড়ের প্রকৃতির বিকল্প ভাব। জগতের লয় ও নিবাকার অবস্থায় ব্রহ্ম একক। এই ভাব পবিত্যাগ কবিয়া ব্রহ্মের “বহু স্যাম্” বহু হইবার ইচ্ছাতেই সৃষ্টি। স্রুতবাং সৃষ্টিতত্ত্বের মূলে যে ব্রহ্ম-ইচ্ছা বর্তমান, উহা হইতেই প্রকৃতির সংহতি বা মিথুনভাব। এই ভাবে অনুপ্রবেশাতেই মানুষ সমাজবদ্ধ হইয়া বাস করে। প্রায়ই দেখা যায়, মানুষ একাকী থাকিতে চায় না। এই জন্যই স্ত্রীপুরুষের মিথুন বা বিবাহ। ইহা হইতেই পবিত্যবের উদ্ভব। আর বহু পবিত্যবের মিলনে সমাজের উৎপত্তি।

এই সমাজ বন্ধনের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে পবিত্যবের সুবিধার জন্য নিয়ম সৃষ্টি হয়। এই নিয়ম সমাজস্থ ব্যক্তিবর্গের স্বৈচ্ছাসমুত্ত। এই নিয়মগুলির কতকংশ দৃঢ়বদ্ধ, আবার কতক পবিত্যবর্জনশীল। যেগুলি সর্বদা সর্বক্ষেত্রে সকলের পক্ষে সমান বা একরূপ সেইগুলিই দৃঢ়বদ্ধ বা অপবিত্যবর্জনশীল, আর অন্যগুলি স্থান কাল পাত্র অনুসারে পবিত্যবর্জনশীল। এই নিয়ম কোমলও বটে কঠোরও বটে। এইরূপ নিয়মমধ্যে মানুষ সমাজ বাঁবিয়া সংসারী হইয়া বাস করে। আদি সৃষ্টি হইতে আমাদের পূর্ব পুরুষ আর্য্যগণ এই প্রাকৃতিক নিয়ম মানিয়া সমাজ গড়িয়া গিয়াছেন। এইজন্য আমরা দেখিতে পাই

যে, আমাদের দেবতা, ঋষি, মুনি, কি নাড়া, কি প্রজা সকলেরই গৃহস্থজীবন। এই গার্হস্থ-জীবনেই সমাজের মূলপত্তন, তাই সমাজ নানিয়া বাস। আমরাও সেই নিয়মেই চলিতেছি এবং পানিপাশ্বিক অবস্থার সঙ্গে সামঞ্জস্য রাখিবান জন্য পূর্ব নিয়মের কোথাও বোথাও পরিবর্তন যে না ঘট্যাছে তাহা নহে, এবং ভবিষ্যতেও পরিবর্তন থাকিবে। এই নিয়ম সর্বকালে একরূপ থাকিতে পারে না। কেবল ভগবৎ নিয়মই একরূপ থাকে। যখন দুই ভাগ অম্লিজেন গ্যাস ও এক ভাগ হাইড্রোজেন গ্যাস মিলিলেই জলের স্রষ্টি হইবেই, ইহান ব্যতিক্রম নাই। কিন্তু মানুষের গড়া নিয়ম সকল ক্ষেত্রে স্থির থাকিতে পারে না। আমাদের স্মৃতি-সংহিতাগুলি তাহার প্রমাণ। যদি এক নিয়মই চলিত তাহা হইলে আঠার-উনিশখানি স্মৃতিগ্রন্থ নচিত হইত না। স্বতরাং সমাজে নূতন নূতন সমস্যা যখন উঠে তখন প্রচলিত স্মৃতিতে তাহা নীমাংসা সম্ভব না হইলে নূতন নিয়ম রচিত হইবেই, এবং তাহাই হয়।

বড় বড় মনীষী বাঁহান। হইবা খান্দান, তাঁহান দেশের ও জগতের হিতের জন্য অনেক প্রকার নূতন ভাব দিয়া যান, পনে উহান ব্যর্থ দেখা যায়। যখন স্বামী বিবেকানন্দ। এই তেজস্বী দেশহিতব্রতী সন্ন্যাসী যে ভাবনাশি দিয়া গিয়াছেন, এখন তাহান ক্রিয়া দেখা যাইতেছে। মহাত্মা গান্ধী নব্যে ঐ ভাববানান্দ্রবর্ণণ ও দেখা দিয়াছে। সেইরূপ কালে কালে সমাজের সঙ্গে কত বকম সমস্যা দেখা দেয়। সমাজ-বর্ণশীল মনীষীগণ তাহা উপলব্ধি করেন, তাহা নিবাকরণের পন্থা নির্দেশ করেন এবং দেশ-কাল-পাত্রানুসারে জাগতিক সংঘর্ষে আবণ্ড বত সমস্যা উঠিতে পারে তাও চিন্তা করেন ও উহা সমাধানের কি পথ তাহাও অনুধাবন করেন। ইহান দৃষ্টান্ত পাওয়া যায় সাব গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের। তাঁহান “জ্ঞান ও কর্ম” পুস্তক দেখিলেই একথা উপলব্ধি হইবে। তাহাতে সমাজের বিভিন্ন বিভিন্ন স্তরে বত জাতীয় চিন্তা, কত প্রশ্ন, তাহার নীমাংসা, কত কথাই না দেখিতে পাই। নিঃস্বার্থভাবে মনীষীরা যে কাজ সমাজের কল্যাণের জন্য করেন তাহার ফল হয় স্বদুর্-প্রসারী। আর স্বার্থপ্রণোদিত কাজ ক্ষণভদ্র। সাব গুরুদাসে ইহাবও উদাহরণ আছে। ১৩০৭ সালে বা ১৯০১ খৃষ্টাব্দে সববার বাহাদুর লোকগণনার (সেন্সাস) ব্যবস্থা করেন। বিজুলী সাহেব হইলেন ইহাব কর্তা। তাঁহাব উপর এই কাজের সঙ্গে উচ্চ-নীচ-জাতিসমূহের স্থাননির্ণয়ের ভাব পড়ে। তিনি একটি বৃহৎ তালিকা বাহিব করেন, তাহাতে কোন্ জাতির পর কোন্ জাতি অর্থাৎ শ্রেষ্ঠ কে, তাহা পর কে, তাহা পর কে, একরূপ উচ্চ নীচ স্থান নির্দ্ধারণ ছিল। হিন্দু সমাজে বিভিন্ন জাতির যেকোন সামাজিক আসন নির্দ্ধিষ্ট আছে, বিজুলী সাহেবের তালিকায় সেই সেই জাতি ঠিক সেই সেই স্থানে গৃহীত হয় নাই। তিনি বাংলা দেশের সনাতন প্রথা ব্রাহ্মণের পরেই কায়স্থ, তৎস্থলে বৈদ্য জাতিকে কায়স্থ জাতির পূর্বে স্থান দিয়াছিলেন। এই তালিকা বাহিব হইলে সাবা ভাবতের হিন্দু-সমাজ বিচলিত হইয়াছিল, ফলে বিষম আন্দোলন উপস্থিত হয়। বিজুলী সাহেবের এই কার্য দেখিয়া এই মহান্ মনীষী ঋষিকল্প জজ গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় দেশ ও সমাজের যৌবতর অকল্যাণ ও অশান্তি নিবারণ মানসে কায়স্থ সমাজের নেতৃবৃন্দ শ্রদ্ধেয় বর্মানাথ ঘোষ, মতিলাল ঘোষ, কালীনাথ মিত্র, ভূপেন্দ্রনাথ বসু, বাব নন্দলাল বসু প্রমুখ গণ্যমান্য বন্ধুবর্গকে বিজুলী সাহেবের প্রকাশিত তালিকার যৌব প্রতিবাদ কবিবার উপদেশ দেন, আরও জানান যে, টাউন কাউন্সিল নামক সভার মত এ বিষয়ে কি, তাহা গবর্ণমেন্ট জানিতে চাহিয়াছেন, সেখান হইতেও তাঁহাবা জানাইবেন যে কায়স্থ-জাতি ও বৈদ্যজাতি কোন বর্ণ তাহা নির্ণয় কবিতে হইলে বহু দেশের বহু পণ্ডিতের ও বহু পুঁথি ও পুস্তকের সহায়তা গ্রহণ কবিতে হইবে, উহা ব্যয়সাধ্য ও সময়সাপেক্ষ, গবর্ণমেন্ট অর্থ ও সময় প্রদান কবিলে ইহা স্থির হইতে পারে। তবে এ দেশে ব্রাহ্মণের অব্যবহিত পরেই কায়স্থের স্থান, ইহাই সমাজে চলিয়া আসিতেছে। তাঁহাব এই স্মৃতিস্তম্ভ ফলে “বঙ্গদেশীয়

কায়স্থ সভা'ন সৃষ্টি ও চানি শ্ৰেণী দ্বাৰাহেৰে পিনন সম্বন্ধপৰ স্য এবং দায়স্থ-ভাতি মে শাস্ত্ৰিও ভায়া গুৰুদাস বাবুও দেখাইয়া দিয়াছিলেৰে এবং দায়স্থ সভা হইতে উহাৰ বহু প্ৰনাথ সংগ্ৰহ পূৰ্বৰ প্ৰচাৰ কৰা হয়। এই কায়স্থেৰে জাতীয় সভা ও ভাস্যহানতায় দায়স্থ ভাতিৰ উন্নতি সৃষ্টি ব্ৰাহ্মণ সভা, বৈদ্য সভা প্ৰভৃতি বহু জাতিৰ বহু জাতীয় সভা ক্ৰমঃ হাপিত হইয়াছে। দায়স্থ প্ৰত্যেক ভাতিই মানাসিক উন্নতিৰ চেষ্টা কৰিতেছে। তঁহানাই ননীয়া ও ধানি পদবাচ্য, বাঁহান্দেৰে সুম্মা দৃষ্টি ও দায়স্থ দায়স্থ উপকাৰে আসে। ধানি ওবদায় দেখিতে পাঠিয়াছিলেৰে যে, যদবান্দেৰে এই দায়স্থ দায়স্থ ভাতিৰ জীৱনে মহা বিঘোভ ও বোদন্তন অদন্যৰ্ণ আনিলে, সেইজন্য এই দায়স্থ দায়স্থ ভাতিৰ দায়স্থ কায়স্থ ভাতিৰে খাড়া কৰিয়াছিলেৰে। দায়স্থৰ অদ্যেৰে আদৰ্শনা ও দায়স্থৰ উচ্চেষ্টাই দায়স্থৰ ননীষিগণেৰে বৰ্তব্য। তিনি মে বৰ্তব্য পানান অধ্যয়ী ছিলেৰে। দায়স্থৰ ভাতিৰ দায়স্থৰ দায়স্থ তিনি নিৰ্ভীকভাৱে দায়স্থৰ বহু বদনীয় দায়স্থ কৰিয়া গিয়াছেৰে, বুনাইয়া গিয়াছেৰে, দেখাইয়া গিয়াছেৰে। নিঃস্বৰ্ণ ওবদায় প্ৰদৰ্শিত পথে দায়স্থ চানিলেৰে দায়স্থৰ বহু দায়স্থ সংশোধিত হয় এবং বহু কল্যাণ দায়স্থৰ হইতে পালে।

বৰ্ত্তনানে হিন্দু সমাজে বাঁহান্য দায়স্থ সংস্কাৰেৰে হুৰ্তা হইয়াছেৰে ও হইতেছেৰে তঁহানিগণেৰে নন্যে একটি বিষয় বহু প্ৰবৰ্ত। সোণ হইতেছেৰে যে, দায়স্থৰে মেগানে তঁহান দায়স্থৰ নন্যেৰে দায়স্থৰ প্ৰতিভাভাৱন স্বার্থে আঘাত লাগিয়াছেৰে অথবা লাগিতেছেৰে, সেই দায়স্থৰ দায়স্থ তিনি দায়স্থ সংস্কাৰক। দায়স্থৰে ঐ স্বার্থৰ দায়স্থ বাৰ্য্যে কৃতদায়স্থ না হইলেই বিদেশী শাসনেৰে স্বৰ্ণনা লইয়া সেই গলদাট দায়স্থৰে দায়স্থ চাপাইবাৰ নিয়ম বিবিধক বনাইয়া লওনা হইতেছে। হিন্দু সমাজ সদনেৰে যে দায়স্থৰে “বিল পাশ” (নিয়মবদ্ধ) হইয়া গিয়াছেৰে, উহাৰ উৎসেৰে আগাগোড়া আলোচনা ও অনুসন্ধান হইলে অনেক গত্য তথ্য বাহিৰ হইয়া পড়িব। স্মৃতাং একথা বলা চলে যে, স্বৰ্ণৰ্ণ প্ৰণোদিত হইয়া এখন দায়স্থ সংস্কাৰক। অবশ্য একথা স্বীকাৰ্য্য যে, প্ৰাচীন আৰ্য্যগণ বৰ্ত্তনানেৰে হিন্দুদিগেৰে পূৰ্বপুৰুষ হইলেও, তঁহাদেৰে প্ৰবৰ্ত্তিত সকল নিয়ম সকল আচাৰ-ব্যবহাৰ এই হিন্দু এখন নানে না। দায়স্থৰে বহু জাতিৰ সংস্পৰ্শে হিন্দুৰে আসিতে হইতেছেৰে, তঁহাৰ কলে মেগানেৰে বহু নিয়ম বহু আচাৰ ও বহু বৰ্ত্তকাৰ্য্য দায়স্থৰে হইয়াছেৰে, পবিত্ৰ্যক্ত হইয়াছেৰে, আচাৰ তৎস্বলে অনেক নূতন বিহু স্বীকৃত হইয়াছেৰে। মেগানেৰে দায়স্থৰে নানাবিধ বিবাহ, অসবৰ্ণ-বিবাহ স্বীকৃত হইত, এখন মেগানেৰে একমাত্ৰ প্ৰাচ্যাপত্য বিনাৰ চানিতহে। সেকালেৰে যজ্ঞগুণি উঠিয়া গিয়াছেৰে, তৎস্বলে নানাবিধ দেবতাৰ পূজা প্ৰচলিত হইয়াছেৰে। মেগানেৰে ছুঁৎসৰ্গ ছিল না। এখন উহা ভাৰতেৰে কোন কোন অংশে এত প্ৰবল হইয়াছিল যে, উহা অত্যাচাৰ-কাৰ্য্যে গান্ধীজীৰ নিকট বিবেচিত হওয়াৰ তিনি ঐ ছুঁৎসৰ্গ তুলিয়া দিবান ভন্য “হৰিজন আদোনন” উপস্থিত কৰিয়াছেৰে। মেগানেৰে যে কোন বৰ্ণেৰে বৰ্ণন যে কোন বৰ্ণ আহাৰ কৰিতেৰে, বিহু এখন তাহা হয় না। এখন এক ব্ৰাহ্মণেৰে বৰ্ণনই সকল জাতি গ্ৰহণ কৰে, নতুবা শূদ্ৰেৰে অনু উচ্চবৰ্ণ আহাৰ কৰে না। এমন কি এক জাতি শূদ্ৰেৰে অনু অন্য জাতি শূদ্ৰও গ্ৰহণ কৰে না। অধিক কি বাচী বৈদিক বাবেৰে ব্ৰাহ্মণ পৰম্পৰেৰে অনু স্বীকাৰ কৰেন না। এখন এ প্ৰথা কলিবাৰতায় এককপ উঠিয়াই গিয়াছেৰে, তথাপি পাড়াগাঁয়ে এ প্ৰথাৰ এখনও বিক্ৰম আছে। এই ছোঁয়াচে ভাৰ আমাদেৰে জাতীয়তা ভাৰকে সক্ষীণ কৰিয়া দিয়াছেৰে। যুগধৰ্মে বহু দেশেৰে বহু জাতিৰ সঙ্কে মেলামেলা অনিবাৰ্য্য হওয়াৰ এবং কাৰ্য্যব্যাপদেশে বহু অনাৰ্য্য দেশে যাতায়াত কৰিতে বাধ্য হওয়াৰ আৰ প্ৰাচীন ৰীতি নিষ্ঠাৰ সঙ্কে হিন্দুজাতিৰ পালন কৰা প্ৰায় কেত্ৰেই সম্ভবপৰ নয়। এজন্য সংগ্ৰহ স্মৃতি নিবন্ধেৰে দোহাই দিয়া বৰ্ত্তনানে সমাজৰক্ষা হিন্দুৰ পক্ষে কঠিন, বৰং প্ৰাচীন স্মৃতি-সংহিতাৰ মূলতত্ত্ব গ্ৰহণ কৰিয়া তাৰ দোহাই দিলে সমাজ বাঁচিতে পাবে। প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে প্ৰাচীন স্মৃতি গ্ৰন্থেৰে মৌলিক ভিত্তি আলোচনা কৰিয়া উহাৰ প্ৰদৰ্শিত পথে সমাজ সংস্কাৰকগণ স্মৃতিৰ সংস্কাৰ কৰিতে যত্নবান হইলে

সমাজেৰে তথা জাতিৰ উন্নতি অনিবাৰ্য্য। আমাদেৰ স্মৃতি-সংহিতা অতি উদাৰ। যখন যে ক্ষেত্ৰে যেকপ আবশ্যক হইয়াছে সেখানে সেইকপ সংস্কৃত হইয়াছে। আমাদেৰ যে অষ্টাদশ স্মৃতি-সংহিতা বৰ্ত্তমান তাহাৰ আলোচনা কৰিলেই ইহা স্পষ্ট হইবে। গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় সমাজ সম্বন্ধে অনেক কথাৰ আলোচনা সমালোচনা কৰিয়াছেন, সেগুলি যেমন হৃদয়গ্রাহী তেমনি তাহা তাঁহাৰ উদাৰ হৃদয়েৰ পৰিচায়ক। বস্তুতঃ তাঁৰ সমাজ সেবা ছিল অকৃত্ৰিম, স্বাথ শূন্য এবং সেই অতি প্ৰাচীন ঋষিদিগেৰে মত মহান্ উদাৰ। সমাজ সম্পৰ্কে যে ভাবে চিন্তা-আলোচনা কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন, বলিয়া গিয়াছেন এবং যে সকল সদ্ব্যক্তিৰ অবতাবণা কৰিয়াছেন, তাহা ধীৰভাবে চিন্তা কৰিলে দেখা যায় যে, তিনি বত উচ্চ ছিলেন, তাঁহাৰ সমাজ সম্বন্ধে জ্ঞান কত গভীৰ ছিল, আৰু সমাজেৰে কল্যাণ সাধনে গুপ্ত যোগীৰ ন্যায় কত পৰিশ্ৰমই না স্বীকাৰ কৰিয়াছেন। একপ তেজস্বী উদাৰ ঋষিকল্প মহাপুৰুষ যে জাতিতে, যে দেশে, যে পল্লীতে জন্মগ্রহণ কৰেন সেই জাতি, সেই দেশ, ও সেই স্থান বন্য পুত্ৰ ও মহান্ হয়। আৰু যাঁহাৰা এই মহাপুৰুষেৰে সঙ্গ কৰিতে পাৰিয়াছেন তাঁহাৰাও ধন্য পবিত্ৰ ও কৃতকৃতার্থ।

কয়েকটি চিঠি

নমস্কাৰ পূৰ্ব্বক সৰ্বনয় নিবেদন,

আপনাৰ যাহা বক্তব্য তাহা কাল বৈকালে মুখে মুখেই বলিতে পাৰিতেন, তথাপি পত্ৰখানি যে নিজে হাতে কৰিয়া আনিয়াছিলেন, ইহা আমাৰ বিশেষ সৌভাগ্য, কাৰণ মুখেৰে কথা তখনই অন্তৰ্হিত হইত, কিন্তু পত্ৰখানি যত্ন কৰিয়া ৰাখিলে শত বৎসৰ থাকিতে পাবে। আমি উহা যত্ন কৰিয়া তুলিয়া ৰাখিব এবং আমাৰ মৃত্যুৰ পৰে ঐকপ যত্ন কৰিয়া তুলিয়া ৰাখিবৰ জন্য আমাৰ দৌহিত্ৰ-দিগকে বলিয়া যাইব। কাৰণ উহাতে আপনি আমাকে বলিয়াছেন যে “আপনাৰ সন্মানে বঙ্গবাসী মাত্ৰেই সন্মান কৰা হইয়াছে ও বঙ্গদেশও সন্মানিত হইয়াছে।” অন্যে একথা বলিলে, তাহাৰ মূল্য যাহাই হউক, আপনি সত্যবাদী ও সমাজেৰে শিবোভূষণস্বৰূপ, অতএব আপনাৰ এই উক্তি আমাৰ বংশে চিৰস্মৰণীয় ও চিৰবক্ষণীয়।

যখন বিষবৃক্ষ অনুবাদিত হইয়া প্ৰথম পৰিচিত হয়, তখন একখানি ইংবেজি সংবাদপত্ৰ (Scotsman) বলিয়াছিলেন যে ঐ গ্ৰন্থ সংস্কৃত epic কাব্যেৰে episode গুলিৰ সহিত তুলনীয়, এবং আৰু একজন ইংবেজি সমালোচক সূৰ্য্যমুখীৰ চৰিত্ৰ সম্বন্ধে বলিয়াছিলেন যে Sophocles প্ৰণীত Antigone চৰিত্ৰেৰে পৰে আৰু ইহাৰ তুল্য স্ত্ৰী চৰিত্ৰ কোন সাহিত্যে সৃষ্ট হয় নাই। এ সকল কথা আমি বড় গৌৰবেৰে কথা মনে কৰিয়াছিলাম। কিন্তু আপনাৰ উক্তি আমাৰ পক্ষে তদপেক্ষা অধিকতৰ গৌৰবেৰে হইয়াছে ইতি ১৯ পৌষ, ১৩০০।

শ্ৰীৰক্ষিমচন্দ্ৰ চট্টোপাধ্যায়

গুৰুদাস বাবু,

তোমাৰ ‘জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম’ গ্ৰন্থেৰে প্ৰায় আড়াই শত পৃষ্ঠা হৃদয়ঙ্গম কৰা হইয়াছে। আমি না বলিয়া থাকিতে পাৰিতেছি না যে বাঙ্গালা ভাষাতে একপ উচ্চদৰেৰে গ্ৰন্থ অদ্যাপি আৰু হয় নাই।

আদ্যোপান্ত অতি মহাৰ্ষ অতি ওকতন বিজ্ঞতা (wisdom) তে পৰিপূৰ্ণ। এত বিজ্ঞতান বখা একাধাৰে সমাহত নবিত্তে যে বি' পৰ্য্যন্ত শাস্ত্র-জ্ঞান ও চিন্তাশীলতান পনিচন দেওনা হইয়াছে তাহা বাক্যাতীত। সেই সন্ধে আৰান দেখিতেছি যে নচনান পানিপানি ভাবেন গভীনতা অপেক্ষা কোন অংশেই ন্যূন নহে। এৰাটিও নূতন শব্দ স্ফটি বনা হয় নাই অশচ দুকহ ও দুৰবগাহ সমস্ত তৰ্হই বিশেষ-ৰূপে প্রকটিত হইয়াছে। কোনও পাঠকেৰ একপ বলিবান অনিকান নাই যে ভাষান অন্যজ্ঞতা বশতঃ বুঝিতে পাবিলাম না। তবে ভাবেন দুকহতা নিবন্ধন যদি বে' কোন অংশ বুঝিতে না পাবেন তাহা স্বতন্ত্ৰ বখা। আনি দেখিতেছি তোমান এ গ্রন্থখানি আনাদিগেন স্বদেশন ও স্বভাবেন এৰাটি গৌনব ও শ্লাঘাব বিষয় হইয়াছে এবং বাদ্ৰালা শাস্ত্র নন্যে আপাততঃ শীৰ্ষস্থান অনিবান ব'নিয়া থাকিবে।

নিজে লিখিতে অনেক সমন বষ্ট বোধ হয়। এই নিমিত্ত, নিমদংশ পবেন দ্বাৰা লেখাইয়া লইলাম—ইহা দ্ৰষ্টব্য ইতি—

শ্রীনিব্ব-কনল শৰ্মা

ও

শান্তি নিকেতন

বোলপুৰ।

বহুমান ভাজনেষু

সবিনয় প্রণতি পূৰ্বক নিবেদন—

আপনাৰ প্ৰেৰিত “জ্ঞান ও বৰ্ণ” গ্রন্থখানি গতবল্য আনান হস্তগত হইয়াছে। বালই আনি পাঠ আৰম্ভ কৰিয়াছি। ক্ৰতবেগে পড়িয়া ফেলিবান মত জিনিষ ইহা নহে। কিন্তু ইহা লক্ষ্য কৰিয়াছি যে ভাষা ও যুক্তি বিন্যাস যতদূৰ পৰ্য্যন্ত সহজ হওয়া সম্ভব তাহা হইয়াছে। একপ ভাষাব সাৰল্য বচনাৰ নিবিডতা এবং যুক্তি বিচাবেৰ বিশদ স্পৃহাশীলতা আপনাৰ মত পাবা হাতে ছাড়া হইবাব জো ছিল না। ইহাব মৰ্য্যে আপনি যে সকল তত্ত্ববখাব অবতারণা কৰিয়াছেন তাহাব সমস্তই গ্রহণ কৰিতে না পাবিলেও শ্রদ্ধান সহিত এবং ঔৎসৰ্হ্যে সহিত পাঠ কৰিতেছি। স্মৃতিতিত শ্ৰেণীবন্ধ আকাৰে কোন মননসাধ্য বিষয়কে একপ সৰ্ব্বাদীণভাবে পৰিব্যক্ত কৰিয়া প্রবাস ব'বা বাংলা ভাষান ইহাব পূৰ্বে আৰ দেখি নাই। আশা কৰিতেছি এইবাব আপনাৰ দৃষ্টান্ত অনুসৰণ কৰিয়া আনো অনেক লেখক সাধ্যমত এই মহাজনেৰ পছা অবলম্বন কৰিবে। নতুবা বাংলা সাহিত্য হইতে চিন্তা প্রণালীৰ আলস্য এবং বচনা প্রণালীৰ শৈথিল্য কিছুতেই দূৰ হইবে না। এ সম্বন্ধে আগাব মত অভাজন বিস্তৰ পাপ কৰিয়াছে কিন্তু প্রায়শ্চিত্তেৰ ভাব বিবাতা আপনাদেব হাতে দিয়াছেন ইহা দেখিয়াই আজ আমি আনন্দ বোধ কৰিতেছি। আগাব প্রণাম গ্রহণ কৰিবেন ইতি ১৬ই ফাল্গুন, ১৩১৬।

স্নেহপ্ৰার্থী

শ্রীবীৰেন্দ্ৰনাথ ঠাকুৰ

Kidderpore, Bedford Park,
Croydon.

June 24th, 1904.

MY DEAR SIR GOOROODASS,

I was delighted beyond measure to see in this morning's paper that the Government have honoured themselves by conferring on

you the dignity of a Knight and I hasten to offer you my hearty and most sincere congratulations on the event. If you will permit me to say so, you have served the country in every capacity occupied by you with ability above the common, with a singleness of purpose not often seen in public men, and with a devotion to duty which leaves nothing to be desired. It is not so much as a Judge that I admire you, though you were from the beginning an honest, conscientious, courteous and capable judge and continued so to the end. You have won my affectionate regard and admiration as a patriot and a man of independence of thought and action. The true interests of our country and the welfare of our young men have always been foremost in your mind and I trust that in your retirement, health and strength will be vouchsafed to you to work for the ends you had in view for the advancement of the cause of the country. Our friend Mr. Rajnarayan Mittra who has luckily passed safely through the severe operation in the throat he has lately undergone and who is now seated in front of me asks me to give you his *pranam* and joins me in wishing you a long and happy life in the midst of your family and descendants.

With the kindest regards,

- Believe me,

Ever yours most sincerely,

W. C. BONNERJEE.

8/2, Loudon Street, Calcutta.

June 24th, 1904.

DEAR SIR GOOROODASS,

Accept the sincere congratulations of an honest admirer of your life and career on the recognition of your long and meritorious work for our country by the Government of the day. Titles can add nothing to the claims which you have on the esteem and respect of your countrymen, but none the less your countrymen sincerely rejoice when they find a great and a good man among themselves deservedly honoured by the powers that be.

My personal relations with you, and my respect for your abilities and character stretch back through a period of forty years. I sat at your feet as a humble learner in the Presidency College in the olden days; I have watched your distinguished career first

as a member of the Bar and then as a Judge of the High Court with admiration ; and I have watched with still greater admiration your endeavours to help all public movements and your devotion to the cause of our country all this time. And if any thing can add to these claims to our esteem and affection it is the simplicity and purity of your private character, the charm and beauty of your private life, which is an example to your countrymen

A moderation which conciliated opponents, a sweet reasonableness which disarmed opposition, combined with an unflinching and unwavering adherence to the principles which you held to be true and correct, have ever marked your high and useful career. As a Judge of the High Court you won the esteem of the nation ; as Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University you helped the education of younger generations ; and I have still more pleasant recollections of the kindly and sympathetic help which you descending from your high position rendered to us in encouraging and helping the formation of a healthy Bengali Literature. The example of your life-work will live among our countrymen as a valuable asset and as an inspiring memory.

Pardon me for writing all this ; it is not often that I have time to indulge in sentiment in the midst of my laborious work. But your name in the papers yesterday called back to my mind memories of nearly forty years and if I have written down hurriedly what I felt, you will no doubt overlook the indiscretion of one who was your old student and is now your humble fellow worker.

Believe me,
Ever yours sincerely,
ROMESH CHANDRA DUTTA

Government House, Calcutta
January 30th, 1904.

DEAR MR BANERJEE,

I have been reading in the newspapers the very honourable and befitting tributes which were paid to you in the High Court yesterday on the eve of your retirement from the Bench. As the Head of the Government at the time when this event so universally regretted takes place, I should like to add my word of congratulation and thanks to you for your long and distinguished career of public

service, and of good wishes to whatever sphere of activity and usefulness (for you could not remain idle) your leisure may tempt you to embark.

When I first arrived in Calcutta I was informed that there was on the Bench of the High Court an Indian Judge who to personal high character and the intellectual aptitudes of his race, added a profound acquaintance with the principles of Western Jurisprudence and in whose mind and speech might be observed a quite remarkable blend of the best that Asia can give or Europe teach. When I made his acquaintance, I learnt that this description was correct and now that he is about to retire from public life, I cannot dissociate myself from the valedictory tributes that are being paid to one who has been such an ornament to his profession and his country.

I am, Dear Mr. Banerjee,
Yours very truly,
CURZON.

St. Xavier's College,
25th June, 1904

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND,

You will believe me when I tell you how happy I am to see His Majesty recognizing publicly your long and loyal services on the Bench and in all matters connected with Education Your manly independence, I am glad to say, has not deprived you of a just reward and I congratulate you heartily for an honour which you did not seek, but which you so well deserve

Very sincerely yours,
E. LAFONT.

Simla,
3rd April, 1915.

MY DEAR SIR GOOROODASS BANERJEE,

I thank you very much for your kind letter, I think that you have really got all that you require for the Hindu University I thank you very much for your far too kind remarks about my speech I am used to kindness from you and although we do not see eye to eye on every point of education. I can assure you that

It is that part of the letter in which you so feelingly allude to the yearning for search after the higher truths of life as being the real reason for retirement with reflecting minds. In referring to this you have pointed to the true Brahminical ideal of retirement. You have acted towards me the part of a true and valued friend and you touched a cord which has been vibrating long and which will go on vibrating till it breaks.

I cordially thank you for your felicitating me of my chance of satisfying the yearning you have so touchingly alluded to but I tremblingly stop with the question—will that satisfaction ever come ?

Yours ever sincerely,
GOOROODASS BANERJEE.

Minverva Theatre,
The 7th March, 1893.

MY DEAR SIR,

With no ordinary pride, I recall to memory those days of Arcadian bliss when I had the honour of being in the same class with yourself. I have been ever since watching from a respectful distance with redoubled interest your exceptionally glorious career, in which, pardon the remark, I cannot but take a personal interest notwithstanding the wide gulf intervening between one who is now so justly “the observed of all observers” and the other rotting in merited obscurity. I realise at my cost the homely Bengali adage “এক ঝাডেব বাঁশেই ফুলের সাজি আর নেথবের ঝুড়ি হয়।”

It is for you to judge how far even in my humble lot I have succeeded in getting out the filth at the hands of the Methar. With these prefatory remarks I beg to avail myself of your kind permission to send you herewith our Visitors' book which I have purposely kept unopened till now, as poor as I am, I have sufficient self-respect not to thrust myself on anyone in whose sound judgment I have not sufficient confidence. As I have taken a bold step in attempting to popularise Shakespeare on the Native stage, I have; I fear thrust my finger into a bee-hive, and my competitors in the field have been moving heaven and earth to throw cold water on my attempt. Hence your kind remarks in our Visitors' book will indeed be quite in time to protect me from my adversaries. Kindly

take the trouble to dwell on all the points connected with our stage including the concert. The reason why I aspire to the honour of having the remarks entered in that book in preference to a separate slip of paper is simply to make the former have an auspicious beginning at your hands

Respectfully yours,
GIRISHCHANDRA GHOSE

77, Russa Road North, Bhowanipur,
12th June, 1904

MY DEAR SIR,

Allow me to offer you my sincere thanks and deep gratitude for your kind congratulations and good wishes; they have to me a special value as coming from one who helped me most materially at the turning point of my career on the 25th March, 1887, and who has been, since then, the best of my friends. I trust you may be spared long to benefit us by your advice and guidance

Yours sincerely,
ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE

77, Russa Road North, Bhowanipur,
24th June, 1904.

MY DEAR SIR,

Allow me to offer you my warmest and sincerest congratulations on your Knighthood, which, after all, is an inadequate and belated recognition of your many services to the country; it might have come fittingly when the first Indian Vice-Chancellor retired from the Vice-Chancellorship.

Yours sincerely,
ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE.

77, Russa Road North, Bhowanipur,
30th June, 1909.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am deeply grateful to you for your kind letter, which has a special value to me as coming from one who had a considerable share in moulding my career. I hope you will be spared long enough to bless me in my future work

Yours sincerely,
ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE.

গুৰুদাস-প্ৰসঙ্গ

কৃষ্ণকমল ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য

যখন গুৰুদাসবাবু পঠদশাতে 3rd-year class-এ উপনীত হইয়াছিলে, সেই সময় হইতে আমি তাঁহাকে দেখিয়া আসিতেছি। তখন আমি Presidency College-এ অধ্যাপক ছিলাম এবং তিনি আমাৰ নিকট নিতান্ত সামান্য বিষয়েই হউক আৰু যাহাই হউক অধ্যয়ন কৰিয়াছিলে। তদবধি তিনি জীবনপথে ক্ৰমশঃ যত অগ্ৰসৰ হইয়াছেন—সেই সমস্ত তাঁহাৰ ক্ৰমিক উন্নতি—আমাৰ স্মৃতিপথে জাগৰুক আছে। আমি সমস্তই অবলোকন কৰিয়া আসিয়াছি। University-ৰ সকল পৰীক্ষা এবং বোধ হয় M A. দিবাৰ পৰেই তাঁহাকে সংসৰ্গকাৰ্য্যেৰ দিকে মনোযোগ দিতে হইয়াছিল। সেই উপলক্ষে তিনি General Assembly Institution-এ গণিতেৰ অধ্যাপক হন এবং তাহাৰ পৰ বোধ হয় Presidency College-এও অল্পদিন ঐ শাস্ত্ৰই অধ্যাপনা কৰিয়াছিলে, .পৰে B L পৰীক্ষা দিবাৰ পৰ তৎকালে Berhampur College-এ Law Professor এৰ পদ শূন্য হওয়াতে তিনি ঐ কাৰ্য্যে নিযুক্ত হইয়া কয়েক বৎসৰ বহবমপূৰ্বে Professor-এৰ কাৰ্য্য এবং ওকালতি কৰিয়াছিলে। আমি শুনিয়াছি সেই সময়ে University-ৰ সৰ্ব্বপ্ৰথম M A. তাৰাপ্ৰসাদ চট্টোপাধ্যায় ঐ স্থানে Deputy Magistrate-ই কাৰ্য্যে নিযুক্ত থাকায় তিনিও তাঁহাৰ Law Lecture-এৰ ছাত্ৰ হইয়াছিলে। বোধ হয় তাঁহাৰ ইচ্ছা ছিল পৰে ওকালতি ব্যৱসায় কৰিবেন। যাহা হউক সেটা আৰু তাঁহাৰ ঘটে নাই। সেই সময়ে তাঁহাৰ Lecture-এৰ উৎকৰ্ষ-সম্বন্ধে সুপ্ৰসিদ্ধ ইংৰাজী সাময়িক-পত্ৰলেখক Reis & Rayyet-এৰ সম্পাদক শত্ৰুনাথ মুখোপাধ্যায় বোধ হয় কোন কোন দিন তাঁহাৰ lecture শুনিয়া একপ্ৰতি হইয়াছিলে যে তাহাৰ অনেক কাল পৰে একদিন আমি তাঁহাৰ নিজ মুখে শুনিলাম—বলিলে “I saw a young man, he was lecturing in beautiful English,” ইহা বলা বাহুল্য ভাল ইংৰাজী বুঝিবাব উপযুক্ত বিচাৰক বোধ হয় শত্ৰুনাথৰ মত আৰু কেহ ছিল না। বহবমপূৰ্বে কয়েক বৎসৰ অতিবাহিত কৰিয়া যখন কিঞ্চিৎ উপাৰ্জন হইয়াছে তখন বোধ হয় জননীৰ পৰামৰ্শ অনুসাবে কলিকাতায় আসিয়া High Court-এ ওকালতি আৰম্ভ কৰিলে। এখানে পসাৰ কৰিবাব জন্য তাঁহাকে বেশী বেগ পাইতে হয় নাই। তিনি একজন স্বনামধন্য উকীল হইয়া উঠিলে এবং সন্তোষকৰণাবে উপাৰ্জন কৰিতে লাগিলে। সেই সন্ধে ক্ৰমশঃ University-ৰ Fellow, Tagore Law Professor ইত্যাদি অনেক প্ৰকাৰ পদোন্নতি পাইতে লাগিলে। তিনি কি ৰাজনীতি-সংক্ৰান্ত কি সামাজিক অন্যান্য বিষয়-সংশ্লিষ্ট সভা ইত্যাদি স্থানে সৰ্ব্বত্ৰই প্ৰবেশলাভ কৰিয়াছিলে এবং Municipality হইতে আৰম্ভ কৰিয়া ছোটলাটেৰ সভা এবং বডলাটেৰ সভা উভয়েই ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে সদস্য হইয়াছিলে। সৰ্ব্বত্ৰই সূচক কাৰ্য্যদক্ষতা, বিদ্যাবত্তা, বুদ্ধিমত্তা প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিয়াছিলে এবং একজন অসামান্য ধীশক্তি সম্পন্ন প্ৰতিভাশালী পুৰুষ বলিয়া তাৰ লোকেৰ নিকট পৰিচিত হইয়াছিলে। University-ৰ member হইয়া বিশেষ পৰিশ্ৰমেৰ সহিত সমস্ত বিষয়ে আপনাৰ ক্ষমতা প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিয়াছিলে। সেই সময়েই তিনি High Court এৰ বিচাৰকেৰ আসন লাভ কৰে এবং পৰে University-ৰ সৰ্ব্বপ্ৰথম ৰাষ্ট্ৰপতি Vice-Chancellor হন। জজ

হইবাব সময়ে আন এব'জন উচচপদস্থ উপাধীন সহিত তাঁহান প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতা ঘটিয়াছিল, কিন্তু আনি শুনিয়াছিল। তৎকালীন বডলাটগাছৰ বলিয়াছিলে "I shall have an orthodox Brahmin on the Bench।" গুৰুদাসবাবু নিবুল হওনাতে তাঁহান সে অভিপ্ৰায় সম্পূৰ্ণ সিদ্ধিলাভ কৰিয়াছিল। সং ব্ৰাহ্মণৰূপে জন্মগ্ৰহণ ব'দিয়া ওন্দাং ব্ৰাহ্মণেৰ আগেন ব্যবহাৰ ব'খনও ত্যাগ কৰেন নাই। এত ইংৰাজী শিক্ষা ব'দিয়াও চালচলন সনই ব্ৰাহ্মণ-পদ্ধতিৰ নত ছিল। তিনি সন্ধ্যা-আহিক না কৰিয়া ব'খনও জলগ্ৰহণ ব'নিতেন না। বোদ হয় তাহান ব'খগৰ্ভা অননীন স্তমিনাৰ গুণে এই সমস্ত অভ্যাস জন্মিয়া গিয়াছিল। তাঁহান নাতামহৰাশও প্ৰকৃত ব্ৰাহ্মণেৰ উপযুক্ত নানা গুণ ভূষিত ছিলেন এইকপ আনান প্ৰতীতি হয়, যেহেতু ওন্দাংবাবুৰ নিজ মুখে তাঁহান নাতুলেৰ এক বৃত্তান্ত আনি শুনিয়াছিল। বোদও এব'জন ব'নাচ্য ব্যক্তি বোদ এদ অনুন্নত নাত title-যুক্ত, অসীম-ক্ষমতা-সম্পন্ন এক নাজসবকাৰে বিছুদিন দেওয়ানী ব'দিয়াছিলে। ঐ ব্যক্তি সেই পদ হইতে অবসৰ লইয়া এব'দিন ক'তবটা পনিহাচছে ব'লিয়াছিলে—“দেখো, লোবে ব'লে যে অমাৰস্যা জন্মগ্ৰহণ ব'ব্লে বালব চোদ হয়, কিন্তু সে ব'না নিতান্ত অনুলব। এই দেখো আমাৰ জন্ম অনাবস্যা তিথিতেই হইয়াছিল, কিন্তু আনি বি' চোদ হইলা? গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ নাতুল সেইস্থানে উপস্থিত ছিলেন এবং বোদ হয় ঐ ব্যক্তিৰ সহিত তাঁহাব কিছু কিছু হৃদয়তাও ছিল। বি' তৎক্ষণাৎ ব'লিয়া উঠিলেন যে “তুনি চোদ নও? এত বড সবকাৰে এতদিন প্ৰবান বাৰ্য্যাব্যাক ছিল, যাহা বি' অৰ্জন ব'দিয়াছ তুনি ব'লিতে চাও সনস্তই সদুপায়ে উপাৰ্জন হইয়াছে? ইহা বে'হই বিশ্বাস ক'নিতেন না।” এইকপ অকুতোভবতা ও স্পষ্টবাদিতা বে'বল প্ৰবৃত্ত ব্ৰাহ্মণেই সম্ভবে। ওন্দাংবাবু জজ হইবাব সময়ে শুনিয়াছি আৰও দু-একাটি হাস্যকৰ ব্যাপান ঘটিয়াছিল। দু-এব'জন বড উকীল নাকি সেই সময়ে টিকি' বাখিতে আৰম্ভ কৰিয়াছিলে। ভাবিলেন যে যদি এই পথ দিহাই জজ হওযা যায়। জজ হইয়া গুৰুদাসবাবু হিন্দু আইন সৰক্কে কয়েকটি বিশেষ প্ৰশংসান যোগ্য নজীব বাখিয়া গিয়াছেন। তাঁহাব পূৰ্বে Chief Justice থাব। বালে Sir Baines Peacock একাটি নজীব বাখিয়া যান যে বিধবা পুত্ৰবধু শ্বশুৰেৰ নিব'ট গ্ৰাসাচ্ছাদন পাইবাব অধিকাৰিণী নহে। এইকপ ব্যবস্থা হিন্দু সমাজেৰ পক্ষে বডই অযুক্ত ও অসঙ্গত বোধ হয় কিন্তু সেই ব্যবস্থাই চলিত হইয়া আসিয়াছিল এবং গুৰুদাসবাবু জজ হইবাব পৰও তাহাব অন্যথা হয় নাই, তবে তিনি উহাব যাহা একটু সংশোধন কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন, তাহাতে হিন্দু সমাজ ক'তকটা সন্তোষ লাভ কৰিয়াছে। গুৰুদাসবাবু নিয়ম কৰিলেন যে বিধবা পুত্ৰবধু শ্বশুৰেৰ নিকট গ্ৰাসাচ্ছাদন পাইবাব অধিকাৰিণী না হউক কিন্তু শ্বশুৰেৰ মৃত্যুৰ পৰ উত্তৰাধিকাৰী যদি সেই বিষয় প্ৰাপ্ত হয় তাহা হইলে উক্ত পুত্ৰবধু উক্ত উত্তৰাধিকাৰীৰ নিকট গ্ৰাসাচ্ছাদন পাইবে। আৰ এক বিষয়েও গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ চেষ্টাতে এক অত্যন্ত হিতকৰ ব্যবস্থা এক্ষণে বন্ধমূল হইয়া গিয়াছে। সকলেই জানেন আগাদিগেৰ শাসনকৰ্ত্তাবা আৰগাবীৰ আয় কিসে বৃদ্ধি হয় সে বিষয়ে বিলক্ষণ তীব্ৰ দৃষ্টি রাখেন। তালগাছেৰ ত কথাই নাই, এমন কি খেজুৰ গাছ, নাবিকেল গাছ, ইহাদেৰ বস হইতে তাডি প্ৰস্তুত হইতে পাবে—এই ছল কৰিয়া—খেজুৰ গাছেৰ উপৰ—এক সময়ে প্ৰত্যেক গাছেৰ উপৰ—বাৰ্ষিক এক টাকা নাস্তুল বসাইবাব চেষ্টা কৰিয়াছিলে, আনি জানি না সে আইন পাশ হইয়াছে কিনা, কিন্তু আৰ এক বিষয়ে তাঁহাবা সেইকপ আৰ একাটি চেষ্টা কৰিয়াছিলে। “অবিষ্ট” নামে এক প্ৰকাৰ ঔষধ আয়ুৰ্বেদে প্ৰচলিত আছে, উহা অত্যন্ত হিতকৰ ঔষধ কিন্তু কিঞ্চিৎ মাদকতা-শক্তি আছে ব'লিয়া উহা আৰগাবীৰ মধ্যে আনিবাব চেষ্টা হইয়াছিল। গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ নিকট বিচাৰার্থে উপস্থিত হইলে তিনি সহযোগীকে বুঝাইয়া এই অন্যায় চেষ্টা বহিত কৰিতে সমৰ্থ হইয়াছিলে। তিনি না থাকিলে এইকপ চমৎকাৰ ঔষধটি আয়ুৰ্বেদ হইতে লোপ পাইত। Tagore Law Professor হিগাবে “বিবাহ ও স্ত্ৰীধন” সম্বন্ধে তিনি যে গ্ৰন্থ প্ৰণয়ন

কবিতা গিয়াছেন এৰুণে তাহা চিবহাৰী অত্যুৎকৃষ্ট পাঠ্যপুস্তক বলিয়া পনিগৃহীত হইয়াছে। ইহা দ্বাৰা ঐ সম্বন্ধে Hindu Law অনেকটা পনিকাব হইয়া গিয়াছে। অব্যাপক-পদ ত্যাগ কবিতা আনি কয়েক বৎসৰ High Court-এ ওলালতি চেষ্টায় ব্যাপ্ত ছিল। সেই সময়ে থান থত্যহই গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ সন্নিহিত আমাৰ সাক্ষ্য হইত। তখন আমি তাঁহান সহিত বংগাবাৰ্ত্তা কবিতা দেখিয়াছি যে Hindu Law সম্বন্ধে তাঁহান জ্ঞান ও বুদ্ধি অত্যন্ত পনিকাব ছিল। সকল সন্দেহই তিনি যথোপযুক্তৰূপে তৎক্ষণাৎ অপনোদন কৰিতে পাবিতেন। দত্ত-গ্ৰহণেৰ পৰ উনস পুত্ৰ জন্মিলে উভয়েৰ মধ্যে বিষয়েৰ ভাগ বিকপ হইবে এই সম্বন্ধে আনান এববান সন্দেহ হওবাত্তে আমি গুৰুদাসবাবুৰে জিজ্ঞাসা কৰিলাম এবং তিনি তখনই সংশয় নিবাস কৰিলেন।

Vice-Chancellor-এৰ কাৰ্য্য-সম্পাদন-বালে গুৰুদাসবাবু দুই এবটি খুব ভাল ব্যবস্থা কবিতা গিয়াছেন। আনান বোৰ জন Head Examiner নিযুক্ত কৰান ব্যবস্থা তাঁহানি উদ্ভাবিত। University-ৰ যেকপ বিভাট্ ব্যাপাব চলিতা আসিতেছিল তাহাতে Head Examiner-এৰ ব্যবস্থা প্ৰচলিত না কৰিলে বোন মতেই পনীক্ষাদিন কাৰ্য্য সম্বন্ধে হইত না। তিনি পৰিশ্ৰম কৰিতে বংগনই পৰাঙ্কন হইতেন না, এবং ব'ৰ্ডবোন আহ্বানে কখনই কৰিব হইতেন না। কখনও কখনও একপ আবেগ কৰিতেন যে “বিশ হাজাৰ পৰ্য্যন্ত পনীক্ষার্থীদিগেৰ মাৰ্ক (Mark) ঠিক গণনা হইল বি না ইহা দেখা আনানই দাবিদ, কিন্তু এ অসাধ্য-সাধন এক ব্যক্তিৰ দ্বাৰা কখনই হইতে পাবে না, অতএব অগত্যা আনাকে স্থানে স্থানে পুৰ্ণানুপুৰ্ণৰূপে Mark-এৰ গণনা চেক কৰা ব্যতীত আন কিছুই আনি কৰিতে পাবি না, এজন্য আমি মনে মনে ক্ষুব্ধ হইয়া থাকি।” ফলতঃ Vice-Chancellor হইয়া অবাত্তে পৰিশ্ৰম কৰিবাব যে দৃষ্টান্ত তাহা তিনিই প্ৰথমে দিয়াছেন এবং পৰে তাঁহান দৃষ্টান্তেই অনুসৰণ কৰিতা আন আন বাঙ্গালী Vice-Chancellorগণ কাৰ্য্য কৰিতা গিয়াছেন। অবাত্তে পৰিশ্ৰম কৰিতে তিনি সকল বিষয়েই প্ৰস্তুত হইয়া থাকিতেন। এান বোন সভাসমিতি ছিল না যেখানে আহুত হইলে তিনি কখনও অনুপস্থিত থাকিতেন। সময়ে সময়ে আমি তাঁহান দু-এক পুত্ৰেৰ মুখে শুনিয়াছি “বাবা, কৰছেন বি! আপনান দেহপাত কৰিতে উদ্যত য়োছেন দেখছি।” ফলতঃ তাঁহাবা সৰ্ব্বদাই পিতাৰ জন্য উদ্বিগ্ন ও শঙ্কিত থাকিতেন।

জননীৰ প্ৰতি তাঁহান যে অচলা ভক্তি ছিল ইহা সৰ্ব্বজনবিদিত। জননী অন্তিমবালে সংসদে কয়েকদিন গঙ্গাতীৰে থাকিতে পাবেন এই উদ্দেশ্যে তিনি বহু ব্যয় কৰিতা গঙ্গাতীৰে একখানি বাটী প্ৰস্তুত কৰিয়াছিলেন। একপ মাতৃভক্তি আৰ কোনও বাঙ্গালী আৰ কখনও প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিতাছেন বলিয়া বিদিত নাই। অতি উচ্চপদস্থ হইয়াও তিনি চালচলন অনেকটা সামান্য ব্যক্তিৰ ন্যায় কাৰিতা ছিলেন। অনেক সময়ে নানিবেলভান্ধা হইতে পদব্ৰজেই গঙ্গান্নানে যাইতেন এবং আমি শুনিয়াছি কোন এক সময়ে নাকি বাটী ফিৰিবাব সময়ে পথিমধ্যে কোন ভদ্ৰ গৃহস্থ ব্ৰাহ্মণেৰ বাটীৰ সম্মুখ দিয়া আসিতে আসিতে শুনিলেন যে, বাটীৰ গৃহিণী অত্যন্ত ব্যস্ত ও উৎকণ্ঠিতা হইয়াছেন যেহেতু অনেক বেলা হইয়াছে অথচ লক্ষ্মীপূজা কৰিবাব ব্ৰাহ্মণ তখনও আসেন নাই, গুৰুদাস নাকি তাঁহাকে সান্ত্বনা দিয়া কহিলেন “আপনি ভাবিবেন না, আমি আপনাব লক্ষ্মীপূজা কৰিতা দিয়া যাইতেছি।” ইহা স্মৃদ্ধিবচনা মাত্ৰ বা সত্য কথা তাহা আমি জানি না, কিন্তু গুৰুদাসেৰ যে স্বভাব, চৰিত্ৰ, সৌজন্য, সদাশয়তা ও নিবহঙ্কাৰতা ছিল, তাহাতে উপবোল্ল গল্পটি যথার্থ হইলেও হইতে পাবে, আমি এ প্ৰকাৰ বিশ্বাস কৰি।

গুরুদাস-স্মৃতি

মহানন্দোপাধ্যায় পণ্ডিত জনপ্রসাদ শাস্ত্রী

ইংৰাজী ১৯ শতকেৰ মন্যভাগে সাৰ গুৰুদাসৰ জন্ম হয়। তাঁহাৰ পিতা নিষ্ঠানান্ হিন্দু ছিলেন। তিনি মোক্তাবী কনিহাৰ আশায় নানিৰদলভাঙ্গায় নাগ কনিহাটিনেন। নানা নবকৃষ্ণ ষ্টীটেৰ এৰ মন্দিৰেৰ পুনোহিতেৰ বাৰীতে তিনি নিৰাচ কনেন, ইহাৰাও খুব নিষ্ঠানান্ হিন্দু ছিলেন। গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ নামা লেখায় চাবুনী কনিহা আপনাদেন অদহা একটু ফিৰাইয়াটিনেন। গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ মুখে তাঁহান নামাৰ অনেক কথা শুনিত পাটতান, নানান চৰিত্ৰেৰ অনেক ঢালা তানৰ উপন পডিয়াছিল। অল্পবয়সেই সাৰ গুৰুদাসৰ পিতৃনিৰাগ হয়। তাঁহান মা ই তাঁহাক মানুহ কনিহাছিলেন, মায়েৰ উপন গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ অচলা ভক্তি ছিল। তাঁহান মা-ও খুব বুদ্ধিমতী ছিলেন এবং পাকা গিনীও ছিলেন, গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ সকল উন্নতিৰ মূলই তাঁহান মা।

সাৰ গুৰুদাস যে সময় ভন্নগ্রহণ কৰেন, সেটা হিন্দু সমাজেৰ পক্ষে যেন নিপ্ৰায়েৰ সময়। সে বিপ্লবটা বাঙ্গালাৰ যত কুটুক আন না কুটুক, বলিৰাতায় অত্যন্ত কুটিয়াছিল। এৰ দিকে বাপ, মা, আত্মীয়স্বজন ছেলেদেৰ হিন্দু কৰাইবাৰ জন্য চেষ্টা কৰিতেন, তাহাদিগৰে আচাৰ-বিচাৰ শিখাইতেন, সন্ধ্যা-আহ্নিক কৰিতে শিখাইতেন, দেনতা-ব্রাহ্মণে ভক্তি কৰিতে শিখাইতেন, আন এক দিকে স্কুলে মাষ্টাৰবা বলিতেন—ইংৰাজী শেখ, ইংৰাজেৰ মত চালচলন কন, দেবতাটা কু-সংস্কাৰ, ব্রাহ্মণবা জুয়াচোন, আচাৰ-বিচাৰ বৃথা পৰিশ্রম। এই দোটানায় পডিয়া সে কালৈৰ লোৰ বডই বিষম সময়ায় পডিয়াছিল। ইংৰাজী ও বাঙ্গালা সভ্যতাব কোন্টা টিকিবে, তখনও তাহা স্থির হয় নাই, অধিকাংশ ছেলেই মাষ্টাৰদেৰ কথাই শুনিত। মাষ্টাৰ হয় ইংৰাজ, নয় ইংৰাজেৰ চেলা, ছেলেদেৰ চালচলন সব ইংৰাজী ধৰণেৰ হইয়া পডিত, ইংৰাজী শিখিলেই মদ খাইতে হইত, মদ না খাইলে সভ্যতাই হয় না।

এই বিষম সঙ্কটেৰ সময়ে সাৰ গুৰুদাস ইংৰাজী শিখিতে আৰম্ভ কৰেন। তাঁহাৰ বুদ্ধি অতি তীক্ষ্ণ ছিল। যে সকল মাষ্টাৰ তাঁহাকে হেৰাব স্কুলে ভক্তি কৰিয়াছিলেন, তাঁহাবা বলিতেন, “ভক্তি কৰাব জন্য গুৰুদাসকে পৰীক্ষা কৰিতে গিয়া দেখি, তাহাৰ কিছুই ঠেৰে না। তাহাকে খুব নীচেৰ ক্লাসেই ভক্তি কৰা হইল, তখন নীচেৰ ক্লাসে উঠা-নামা হইত। গুৰুদাস প্রথম দিনেই ফাষ্ট হইয়া বসিল, তাহাৰ পৰ কখনই সেখান হইতে নামিল না, স্কুল হইতে এন্ট্রান্স ক্লাসে ইউনিভাৰসিটিতে ফাষ্ট হইয়া পাশ হইল, কলেজেও তাই, বৰাবৰ ফাষ্ট এম-এতেও ফাষ্ট”। গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ হেৰাব স্কুলেৰ উপৰ বডই টান ছিল, হেৰাব স্কুলেৰ সকল প্রকাৰ উৎসবেই তিনি আসিতেন। যখন হেড মাষ্টাৰ গিৰিশচন্দ্র দেব মহাশয় পেন্সন লয়েন, তখন গুৰুদাসবাবুকে থ্ৰেসিডেণ্ট কৰিয়া তাঁহাৰ স্মৃতি-বক্ষার্থ চেষ্টা কৰা হয়। কাৰ্য্যটি ছোট হইলেও গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ তাহাতে বেশ আগ্রহ ছিল।

সমাজ-সঙ্কটেৰ, সভ্যতা-সঙ্কটেৰ সময়ে গুৰুদাসবাবু ছেলেমানুষ হইয়াও খুব বীৰভাবে কাৰ্য কৰিয়াছিলেন। ইংৰাজী চালচলন তাঁহাতে একেবাবেই প্রবেশ কৰে নাই, তাঁহাৰ মা তাঁহাকে খাঁটি হিন্দু কৰিয়া তুলিয়াছিলেন। তিনি নিত্য সন্ধ্যা-আহ্নিক কৰিতেন তাঁহাৰ মা তাঁহাকে কিছুই বাদ দিতে দিতেন না, ঠাকুৰপূজা, লক্ষ্মীপূজা, ঘণ্টীপূজা গুৰুদাস নিজেই কৰিতে পাৰিতেন এবং অনেক সময়ে কৰিতেন, শ্রাদ্ধ-তৰ্পণাদিও যথাশাস্ত্র কৰিতেন, তাঁহাৰ ক্লাসেৰ ছেলেবা তাঁহাকে অদ্ভুত জীৰ বলিয়া মনে কৰিত।

বলেজ হইতে বাহিৰ হইয়া গুৰুদাসবাবু দিন বতৰক ভেনাবেল এসেম্বলীতে থকোৱাৰী কৰেন তাহাৰ পৰ উকীল হইয়া বহনপুৰ যান। সেখানে, গুনিবাছি, কোন ভদ্ৰ শূদ্ৰ তাঁহাৰ বাডী খাইতে আসিলে তিনি খুব যত বনিয়া খাওয়াইতেন, কিন্তু থালাখানি পুডাইয়া শুদ্ধ কনিয়া লইতেন। তাঁহাৰ আফিসেৰ কাপড বাহিৰেই যবে থাকিত। সে কাপড লইয়া তিনি বাডীৰ ভিতৰ বাইতেন না। তিনি যখন হাইকোৰ্টেৰ উকীল, তখন তিনি ১০টা-১১টাৰ সন্মত বাডী হইতে বাহিৰ হইয়া আসিতেন, কোৰ্টেৰ কাষ সানিয়া, অনেক মিটিং সানিয়া, বাডী যাইতে তাঁহাৰ ৭টা-৮টা বাজিত, কিন্তু আফিসেৰ কাপডে তিনি এক বিন্দু জলও পান কৰিতেন না। গুনিবাছি, তিনি আদালতেই বাডীৰ জন্য ভাল ভাল ফলমূল বিনিমিতেন, কিন্তু বেহ গুৰিগা দিলে তৎক্ষণাৎ ফেলিয়া দিতেন।

তিনি যখন বহনপুৰে উকীল এবং সেখানৰা ন-লেকচাৰাৰ, তখন সৰ্ব্বপ্রথমে থ্ৰেনচাঁদ-বাগচাঁদ পৰীক্ষা হব। বুনিভাগিৰি নেভিষ্টাৰ মিঃ সাটক্লিফ তাঁহাকে এই পৰীক্ষা দিতে নিষেধ কৰিয়াছিলে। বানগ, তাঁহান ইচ্ছা ছিল এই স্বলাদশিপটি আশুতোষ নুখোপাধ্যায় পান। ইনি সান আশুতোষ নন, তাঁহাৰ অনেক আগেই লোব। গুৰুদাসবাবু বিস্ত পৰীক্ষা দিতে আসিলেন। তাঁহাকে দেখিয়াই মিঃ সাটক্লিফ বলিলেন—“তুমি এখানে কেন?” পৰীক্ষা হইয়া গেল, আশু-বাবুই প্রথম থ্ৰেনচাঁদ-বাগচাঁদ স্বলাদশিপ পাইলেন, গুৰুদাসবাবু ভলেনে মৰ্যে একবান ফেল হইলেন, তিনি আৰ এ পৰীক্ষা দেন নাই।

বলেজে এম এ পৰীক্ষা দিবান সন্মত নীলাদৰ নুখোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় তাঁহাৰ থ্ৰান প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বী ছিলেন। সাৰ গুৰুদাস অকুশাভ্ৰে, নীলাদৰ নুখোপাধ্যায় সংস্থতে পৰীক্ষা দিবেন। আপনাৰ আপনাৰ বিষয়ে দুই জনই বনুৰ্বব, দুই জনই ফাৰ্ট হইবান জন্য খুব চেষ্টা কৰিতে লাগিলেন। তাঁহাৰ এই প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতাৰ কথা গুনিতে পাটয়া গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ না এক দিন তাঁহাবে ডাবিয়া বলিয়াছিলে, “কি গুৰুদাস, তুমি আৰ নীলাদৰ না কি দেখানেগি কনিয়া লেখাপড়া শিখিতছিস, ছিঃ।” গুৰুদাসবাবু আনাকে অনেববান বলিয়াছে—“এই কথা শোনাৰ পৰ আনি আৰ প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতাৰ ভাব মনেও বাখি নাই। যেমন বীতিনত পডিয়া যাই, তেননই কৰিতে লাগিলান, দুজনই ফাৰ্ট ক্লাসে ফাৰ্ট হইয়া পাশ হইলাম।”

এখনবান ইংৰাজীওয়ালাদেৰ প্রায়ই দেখিতে পাওয়া যায়, গৃহস্থালীৰ দিকে অণুমাত্রও দৃষ্টি নাই। ভাঁডান যে এবটা বাখিতে হয়, ইহা অনেবেৰ বাবগাই নাই, দিন পয়সা ফেলিয়া বাজাৰ হইতে জিনিষ আনিয়া তাঁহাৰা আহাৰাদি কৰেন। কিন্তু গুৰুদাসবাবু বাডীৰ চাবিদিকে বাগান কৰিতেন, বলিতেন, চাকৰ-বাৰবেৰ হাতে দিলে তাহাৰা কি কৰিতে কি কৰিয়া বসে ঠিক নাই, নিজে কবাই ভাল। এক দিন বাডীৰ পাশেই দক্ষিণ দিকে একটি থ্ৰকাও মাচা দেখাইলেন, তাহাতে শিম, শশা, ধুঁদুল, সব ফলিয়া বহিয়াছে। গাছপালান সখও তাঁহাৰ বেশ ছিল, কোথা হইতে একটি ভাল আমেৰ কলম আনাইয়াছিলে। দুই এক মাসেৰ মধ্যেই কলম বা কলমেৰ গাছটিতে একটি আম ফলিল। ছেলেবা আমটিকে তুলিতে সৰ্ব্বদাই চেষ্টা কৰিত। তিনি বলিতেন, “না, ওটি পাকিলে ঠাকুৰদেব দিয়া খাইতে হইবে।” তিনি অনেক সময়ে দুঃখ কৰিয়া বলিয়াছে, “সে আমটি কে চুৰি কৰিয়া লইয়া গেল, ঠাকুৰদেবও দেওয়া হইল না, খাওয়াও হইল না।”

পূৰ্বেই বলিয়াছি, মায়েৰ প্রতি তাঁহাৰ বড়ই ভক্তি ছিল। তিনি মাকে দিয়া সবকপ তীৰ্থ-ধৰ্ম কৰাইয়াছিলে। একটি পুৰণিৰী প্রতিষ্ঠা কৰাইয়াছিলে। মায়েৰ শ্রাদ্ধও খুব ভক্তিপূৰ্বক কৰিয়াছিলে। অনেক ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিতকে বিদায় দিয়াছিলে। বিদ্যাসাগৰ মহাশয় কোথাও বিদায় লইতেন না, কিন্তু গুৰুদাসবাবু তাঁহাকে একটি কপাৰ গ্লাস লওয়াইয়াছিলে। তাহাতে অনুষ্টপ্ ছন্দেৰ

দুই চবণ ফোদা ছিল। মায়েৰ স্মৃতিবন্ধাৰ জন্য তিনি যুনিভাৰসিটিতে বিছু টাকাও দিয়াছিলে—যাহা হইতে বৎসৰ বৎসৰ একটি মেডেল দেওয়া হয়।

গুৰুদাসবাবু প্ৰতি বৎসৰ জগদ্ধাত্ৰীপূজা বনিতেন। প্ৰথম প্ৰথম নিজেই গিয়া সকলকে নিমন্ত্ৰণ কৰিয়া আসিতেন, শেষে ছেলেবা যাইতেন। জগদ্ধাত্ৰীপূজা বিছু বঠিন, প্ৰায় দুৰ্গাপূজাই মত, কিন্তু সব এক দিনে বনিত হৈ। পুনোহিত পূজা বনিতেন, বিছু গুৰুদাসবাবু সমস্ত দিন উপবাস কৰিয়া থাকিতেন। পূজাৰ ব্যাপাৰ সমস্তই শাস্ত্ৰমত ঠিক হইত, সে নিময়ে বোনকপ বিভ্ৰাণ্টা কৰিতেন না। দালানেৰ সানে তাঁহাৰ যে উঠান ছিল, তাহাৰ উপৰ ছাদ দেওয়া ছিল, স্তবনাং যাযগা অনেক ছিল। অনেক লোক বসিয়া দাঁড়াইয়া প্ৰতিমা দৰ্শন বনিত। বলিদ্ভাতাৰ মান্যগণ্য লোক সকলেই গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ নিমন্ত্ৰণ পাইয়া আপনাকে ধন্য মনে বনিত। খাওনাৰও নানাকপ উদ্যোগ চলিত। বাঁহাৰা আচমনীয় জিনিষ খাইতেন না, তাঁহাদেৰ জন্য এনাকট দিয়া অথবা পান-ফলেৰ পালে দিয়া নানাকপ মিষ্টান্ন প্ৰস্তুত হইত। আৰ বাঁহাৰা আচমনীয় খাইতেন তাঁহাদেৰ জন্য সূজী, ময়দা প্ৰভৃতি দ্বাৰা মিষ্টান্ন তৈয়াৰী হইত। বাঁহাৰা বসিয়া খাইতেন না, তাঁহাদেৰ জন্য হয় সবায়, না হয় হাঁড়ীতে মিষ্টান্ন গাড়ীতে তুলিয়া দেওয়া হইত। গুৰুদাসবাবু সকলকেই সমানভাবে আপ্যায়িত কৰিতেন, এবং সকলকেই কিছু খাওনাইবাৰ জন্য চেষ্টা কৰিতেন। নিজে সমস্ত দিন উপবাসী হইয়া তিনি যে কেমন কৰিয়া এত খাটিতে পাৰিতেন, সেটা একটা আশ্চৰ্য্যেৰ বিষয়।

হিন্দুধানীৰ কথা উঠিলে গুৰুদাসবাবু বলিতেন যে, “স্মোত ফিলান বঠিন। আমি ত বিশেষ যত্ন কৰিয়া ছেলেগুলিকে নিষ্ঠাবান্ হিন্দু কৰিয়া তুলিয়াছি, কিন্তু সব নাতিগুলিকে বোধ হয় পাৰিলাম না।” পাৰিবেন কেমন কৰিয়া? তিনি যখন জন্মিয়াছিলে, তখন দোটানা একটু একটু আৰম্ভ হইয়াছে। তাঁহাৰ শেষ বয়সে সমস্ত দেশ ইংৰাজীতে প্লাবিত, সব ছেলেই সাহেবীযানা কৰিতে চায়। হিন্দুৰ আচাৰ-বিচাৰ আৰ কতক্ষণ টিকি? আৰ বাস্তবিক কথাও বটে, ছেলেবা কৰিবেই বা কি! তাহাৰা ইংৰাজী, ভূগোল, ইতিহাস, অঙ্ক, জ্যামিতি, বাদ্ৰালা, সংস্কৃত, পৰিমাতি, ড্ৰইং কৰিবে, ফুটবল খেলিবে, ক্ৰিকেট খেলিবে, না শিখিবে ত্ৰয়োদশীৰ দিন বেঙুন খাইতে নাই, নবমীতে লাউ খাইতে নাই, দশমীতে কল্মীশাক, একাদশীতে শিম খাইতে নাই? তাহাৰ পৰ আচাৰ-বিচাৰ বাড়ীৰ মেয়েবা অথবা বুড়াবা শিখাইত। এখন মেয়েবা বেথুন কলেজ থেকে আসেন আৰ বুড়াবা ছেলেদেৰ মতই ইংৰাজীওয়ালা, শিখাইবেই বা কে? তবে গুৰুদাসবাবু নিজে যতটুকু পাৰিতেন, মানিয়া চলিতেন।

এক দিন গুৰুদাসবাবু বলিলেন, “দেখুন ভাষাটাই বদলে যাচ্ছে (সেটা বোধ হয় আশ্বিনমাসে), এই দেখুন, এখন লক্ষ্মণতৰ্পণ বলিলে কেহ আৰ বুঝিতে পাৰে না। আশ্বিনমাসে অপৰ পক্ষে সকলকেই তৰ্পণ কৰিতে হয়। বামচন্দ্ৰ তৰ্পণ কৰিতেন, দুইটি অনুষ্টুপেৰ শ্লোক পড়িয়া তৰ্পণ কৰিতেন, কিন্তু লক্ষ্মণ বলিতেন, আমি অত পাৰিব না। তিনি শুধু বলিতেন, ‘আব্রহ্মস্বপৰ্য্যন্তং জগৎ তৃপ্যতু’ ইহাবই নাম লক্ষ্মণতৰ্পণ। কোন কাৰ্য সংক্ষেপে সাৰিতে হইলে সে কালেৰ লোক বলিত, লক্ষ্মণতৰ্পণ কৰিয়া ফেলুন, এখন ও-কথাটাই উঠিয়া গিয়াছে। কোন পূজা-অৰ্চনাৰ সংকল্প কৰিতে গেলে তাহাৰ শেষে কৰ্ত্তা বলিতেন ‘কৰিষ্যে’ বা ‘কৰিষ্যামি’। এক জন ব্ৰাহ্মণ সেখানে বসিয়া থাকিতেন। তিনি বলিতেন ‘কুক্ৰ্ষু’। ইহাব নাম উত্তবসাধক ছিল। এখন উত্তবসাধক কথাটা কেহই বুঝেন না।” কথাটি খুব ভাল, কোন বিজলিউশান কৰিতে গেলেই এক জন তাহাকে সেকেণ্ড কৰা চাই। সেকেণ্ড কৰাৰ নাম উত্তবসাধকতা। এখনকাৰ লোক দিনকতক চেষ্টা কৰিল, “দ্বিতীয় কবিল” বা “দ্বিতীয়িল”, কিন্তু সেটা চলিল না, “সেকেণ্ড” কৰাই চলিল। এমন একটি সুন্দৰ কথা “উত্তবসাধকতা” লোপ হইয়া গেল। এখন আৰ “দক্ষিণা”

নাই, তাহাব বদলে “ফি” হইয়াছে। স্মৃতবাং গুরুদাসবাবু যে দুঃখ কবিতেন, ভাষাটাই বদলাইয়া যাইতেছে, সেটা বড় বিখ্যা নয়। শুধু ভাষা কেন, আমাদেব খাওয়া-পবা সবই ইংবাজী ধবণে হইয়া যাইতেছে।

ব্রাহ্মণপণ্ডিতদিগকে গুরুদাসবাবু খুব মান্য কবিতেন। নাবিকেলডান্ডায় তাঁহাব বাডীৰ কাছেই সংস্কৃত কলেজেব ন্যাযশাস্ত্রেব অব্যাপক জযনাবাষণ তৰ্কপঞ্চাননেব বাডী ছিল, ছেলেবেলা হইতেই জযনাবাষণেব প্রতি গুরুদাসবাবুব খুব ভক্তি ছিল। ক্রমে বয়স যত বাড়িতে লাগিল, অনেক ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিতেব সঙ্গে তাঁহাব আলাপ-পবিচয় হইল। তিনি তাঁহাদেব যথেষ্ট মান্য কবিতেন। কিন্তু তাঁহাব-এ জ্ঞান ঠিক ছিল যে, ইংবাজী পণ্ডিতবা ইহাদেব অপেক্ষা চেব বড়। এক দিন তাঁহাব বাডীতে কি কায, অনেকগুলি হাইকোর্টেব উকীল নিমন্ত্রিত হইয়া আসিয়াছেন। ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিত কেহই নাই, সংস্কৃত-জানা লোক একটিমাত্র ছিল। ব্রাহ্মণপণ্ডিতদেব কথা উঠিলে গুরুদাসবাবু বলিলেন—“আমাদেব দেশেব ব্রাহ্মণপণ্ডিতবা বেশ intelligent, দেখুন, এক দিন হাতীবাগানেব এক জন বড় স্মার্ত পণ্ডিতকে আমি জিজ্ঞাসা কবিলাম যে, “বিষুব মানে যে দিন দিনবাত্রি সমান, তা যদি হয়, তবে বিষুবসংক্রান্তি ত ১০ই চৈত্র হওয়া উচিত, ওটা আপনাবা চৈত্র মাসেব শেষে লইয়া গিয়াছেন, ঠিক হয় নাই।” পণ্ডিত মহাশয় বলিলেন—“তুমি এখন যে গলিতে বসিয়া আছ, এ গলিৰ নাম কি?” আমি বলিলাম, “বাজা নবকৃষ্ণ লেন।” তিনি জিজ্ঞাসা কবিলেন, “বাজা নবকৃষ্ণ কোথায়?” আমি বলিলাম, “অনেক দিন মবিয়া গিয়াছেন।” পণ্ডিত বলিলেন, “তাঁব নামে গলি থাকে কেন? তা যদি থাকিতে পাবে, তবে ৩১শে চৈত্র বিষুব-সংক্রান্তি হলই বা?” দেখুন দেখি, কেমন intelligent answer. যে সংস্কৃতজানা লোকটি সেখানে বসিয়া-ছিলেন—তিনি একটু ঠেঁটকাটা, তিনি বলিলেন, “মশায়, আপনি ব্রাহ্মণপণ্ডিতদেব যেকপ patronising ভাবে কথা বলছেন, তাঁহাবা বোধ হয়, সে ভাবেব লোক নন। তাঁবা ৩৪ হাজাব বৎসব বিবিয়া সমস্ত ভাবতবর্ষটা চালিয়া আসিয়াছেন, আব তাঁদেব আপনি intelligent ব’লে certificate দিচ্ছেন, আব দিতে পাবছেন, কাবণ, এখানে যাঁবা ব’সে আছেন, তাঁদেব কেহই বোধ হয় তাঁদেব জানেন না।” গুরুদাস বলিলেন, “হাঁ, আপনি বলেছেন ঠিক বটে। এ কথাটাই বোধ হয় ঠিক, তাঁবাই ৩৪ হাজাব বৎসব দেশটা চালিয়ে এসেছেন।”

খাওয়া-দাওয়া বিষয়ে গুরুদাসবাবু বড়ই ‘কটকেনা’ কবিতেন। তিনি কাহাবও বাডী অনুগ্রহণ কবিতেন না। শৃঙ্গুরবাডীও খাইতেন না, ভগিনীপতিব বাডীও খাইতেন না, বলিতেন, “আমাদেব বংশেব ধাবাই এই, আমবা কখনও কোথাও খাই না।” এক দিন এইকপ কথা হইতেছে, এক জন ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিত সেখানে বসিয়া ছিলেন। তিনি বলিলেন, “আপনি ভগিনীপতিব বাডী খান না, ভাগ্গেব বাডীও খান না বোধ হয়।” উত্তর হইল, “আজ্ঞে, তা কেমন ক’বে হয়, হ’তেই পাবে না।” ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিত বলিলেন, “আচ্ছা, আমি জিজ্ঞাসা কবি, আপনাদেব বংশেব কেহ মবিলে ভাগ্গে ত তেবাত্রিতে তাব শ্রাদ্ধ এবং পিণ্ডদান কবে। সে কি ভাতেব পিণ্ডি দেব, না লুচিব পিণ্ডি দেব, না সন্দেবেব পিণ্ডি দেব?” গুরুদাসবাবু বলিলেন, “আজ্ঞে, আপনি ঠিক বলেছেন, মবলে যাব ভাত খেতে হবে, জেতে তাব ভাত খাব না, এটা অসঙ্গত বটে, কিন্তু আমবা কি কবব, আমাদেব এটা কুলপ্রথা।”

গুরুদাসবাবু যখন কলেজে পড়েন তখন বাঙ্গালা second language ছিল, কলেজেব অধিকাংশ ছাত্রই বাঙ্গালা পড়িত, কেবল সংস্কৃত কলেজ, জেমোকাদি স্কুল, বিদ্যাসাগর মহাশযেব বীৰসিংহেব স্কুল, প্রসন্নাবাবু খানাকুলেব স্কুল আব হবিনাভিৰ এংগ্লো-সংস্কৃত স্কুলেব ছেলেবা সংস্কৃত

second language নিত, তাদেন বি ত এখনৰ। অংগা দেশী সংস্কৃত পড়িত হইত। গুৰদাস-বাবু থ্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজে ছাত্ৰ, তিনি বাল্যে সংস্কৃত একদানৈ পড়ন নাই। নাত্ৰ দাঙ্গালা পড়িয়া-ছিলেন। কিন্তু ওৰালতী অবস্থান নিশেৰ বচনপূৰ্ণে তিনি আনৰ যত বদিয়া সংস্কৃত শিখিয়া-ছিলেন বহুবচনপূৰ্ণে কলেজে তখন নামগতি নামনয় মহাশয় সংস্কৃতৰ অন্যাপক ছিলেন তাহান নিকট ব্যাবৰণ ও সাহিত্য পড়িয়াছিলেন এনং সংস্কৃত যাবলৈ উন্নতিও লাভ বসিয়াছিলেন। তিনি অনেক সংস্কৃত শ্লোক মুখে মুখেই আওড়াইতে পানিতেন। শ্রীমদ-সম্বন্ধে যখন আশিনে নই লেখন, তখন তাঁহাবে দাবভাগখানি খুব ভাল বদিয়া পড়িত হইয়াছিল দাবভাগে সংস্কৃত বড় গভীৰ ও গাঢ়। আইনেৰ বইএৰ যেনে হওয়া উচিত, দাবভাগে সংস্কৃত ঠিক তেনে। সে বইখানি তিনি দেশ আনত কবিয়াছিলেন, এবং শ্রীমদ-সম্বন্ধে তিনি যানি লিখিয়া গিয়াচেন এখন তাহাই আইন বসিয়া চলিয়া যাইতেছে। এই বই লিখিবান সময়ে তাঁহাবে স্মৃতিশাস্ত্ৰে আনৰ চৰ্চা কৰিতে হইয়াছিল, তিনি ইংৰাজীওয়ালা, ব্ৰাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিতে নত গুৰু বাগৰে বিচান বদিয়া তাত থাকিতেন না, কোন পুঁথি হইতে কিছু উদ্ধৃত অংশ পাইলে তিনি সে পুঁথিখানি আনাইয়া উদ্ধৃত অংশ ঠিক তোলা হইয়াছে বিনা, যে পুঁথিতে ঐ উদ্ধৃত অংশ আছে, তাহান অৰ্থে সহিত উদ্ধাবদৰ্ভা অৰ্থে এন্য আছে বিনা, এ সবগুলি দেখিতেন, এবং একপে দেখিতে দেখিতে স্মৃতিশাস্ত্ৰে তাঁহান দেশ ব্যুৎপত্তি হইয়াছিল। পূৰ্বেই বলিয়াছি, তিনি নিষ্ঠাবান্ হিন্দু ছিলেন, স্ততপাং সন্ধ্যা-আহিনে নই তিনি খুন যত বদিয়া ছাপাইয়াছিলেন, গুৰু ছাপাইয়াছিলেন না, অৰ্থবোধ বদিয়া লিখা-লিখিনী সহিত ছাপাইয়াছিলেন। হলদে কাগজে উহা ছাপা হইয়াছিল। সেই-সন্ধ্যা পুঁথি তিনি মুক্তস্বস্তে দান বনিতেন, ছেলেদেব পৈতা হইলে অনেকে ঐ পুঁথি তাঁহান বাড়ী হইতে আনাইয়া ছেলেদেব মুখস্থ বনাইতেন। অনেক-বাব চেষ্টা হয়, যুনিভাসিটী হইতে সংস্কৃত উঠাইবান জন্য, গুৰদাসবাবু আড হইয়া পড়িয়া উঠাইতে দেন নাই। কিন্তু এখন আব তিনি নাই, এখন সংস্কৃত উঠিতে বসিয়াছে। আন না বসিনেই বা কেন? যে টোল সংস্কৃতবিদ্যাব কেন্দ্ৰ, সেই টোলেই যখন ছাত্ৰ নাই, তখন যুনিভাসিটীতে আব দুখানা বই পড়াইয়া লাভ কি? কিন্তু গুৰদাসবাবু সংস্কৃত আব বাঙ্গালা সংস্কৃত এৰ টু তফাৎ ছিল, গুৰদাসবাবু সংস্কৃতৰ উচ্চারণ পশ্চিমাদেব নত, অকব দেবনাগৰ,—বাঙ্গালা হইবে না, বাঙ্গালাৰ চলিত বইয়েৰ উপৰ তাঁহান বড় শ্ৰদ্ধা ছিল না। বেন ছিল না, ভানি না, তিনি বাঙ্গালাৰ ন্যাযশাস্ত্ৰ অপেক্ষা হিন্দুস্থানী বেদান্ত ভালবাসিতেন, বাঙ্গালাৰ মুক্তবোধ, সুপদ্মা, বলাপ তুলিয়া দিয়া পাণিনি চালাইতে ব্যগ্র ছিলেন, বাঙ্গালাৰ চণ্ডী অপেক্ষা পশ্চিমা ভগবদ্গীতাৰ তাঁহান শ্ৰদ্ধা বেশী ছিল। যা হউক, তিনি সংস্কৃতৰ খুব পৰুপাতী ছিলেন।

বাঙ্গালাৰ সম্বন্ধে কিন্তু তাঁহান ধাবণা অন্যৰূপ ছিল। তাঁহান ইচ্ছা ছিল, লেখাপড়াটা যেন বাঙ্গালায় শেখান হয়, ইংৰাজী দিয়া শাস্ত্ৰ শিখিব, এটা যে একটা বিষয় ব্যাপাব, তাহা তিনি বুঝিয়া-ছিলেন, সেই জন্য ১৮৯২ খ্রীষ্টাব্দে যখন তিনি ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰ হযেন, তখন ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰেৰ বক্তৃতায় বলিয়াছিলেন যে, যুনিভাসিটীতে বাঙ্গালাই মিডিয়াম হওয়া উচিত। এম এ পৰ্যন্ত বাঙ্গালায় শিক্ষা দেওয়া উচিত, একটা বিদেশী ভাষায় জ্ঞানলাভ কৰিতে হইবে, এটা অতি শোচনীয় ব্যাপাব। কিন্তু তিনি সে দিন সাহস কৰিয়া যাহা বলিয়াছিলেন, তাঁহান যে বক্তৃতা ছাপা হইয়াছে, তাহাতে ততদূৰ নাই। জিজ্ঞাসা কৰিলে তিনি বলিতেন, আমি যাহা বলিয়াছিলাম, তাহা একটু ছাঁটিয়া ছাপাইয়াছি। অনেকে মনে কবেন, যেহেতু বাঙ্গালাতে বই পাওয়া যায় না, অতএব বাঙ্গালাতে শিক্ষালাভ হইতে পাবে না, গুৰদাসবাবু সে দলে ছিলেন না। তিনি মনে কৰিতেন, বাঙ্গালা মিডিয়াম হইলে বাঙ্গালায় সব বই-ই তৈয়াৰী হইতে পারিবে, তাহাতে জ্ঞানবিস্তাৰেৰও উন্নতি হইবে, ভাষাবও উন্নতি হইবে।

গুৰুদাসবাবু যখন ছেলেমানুষ, তখন বাদ্ৰালা ভাষাৰ প্ৰথম স্কুল-বই লেখা আৰম্ভ হয়, স্কুল-বই লেখাটো সংস্কৃত কলেজৰ পণ্ডিতদেৱ উপৰেই পড়ে। তাঁহাৰা যে বাদ্ৰালা লিখিতেন, তাহাতে পাৰ্শী, আৰবী প্ৰভৃতি চলিত শব্দ একেবাৰেই থাকিত না, তাহাৰ বদলে থাকিত দাঁতভাঙ্গা, চোৰালভাঙ্গা নূতন তৈৰী, কড়া কড়া সংস্কৃত শব্দ। ক্ৰমে এই ভাষাৰ নাম হয় সাধুভাষা, সংস্কৃত কলেজৰ পণ্ডিতেৰা যে বাদ্ৰালা বই লিখিতেন, তাহাৰ একটা বীতি ছিল, অনেকগুলি গুণ ছিল, বেশ অলঙ্কাৰ ছিল, কিন্তু তাঁৰা ছাড়া আৰ যঁৰা বই লিখিতেন, তাহাতে এই তিনিটাৰ কিছুই ছিল না। কেবল বড় বড় সংস্কৃত কথা, আৰাৰ তাঁহাৰা মাৰো-মাৰো খুব চলতি আৰবী-পাৰ্শী কথাও ব্যবহাৰ কৰিতেন। বেভাৰেও কে এস. বানাজি, বাজা. বামসোহন বাব, গুডগুডে ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য, ঈশ্বৰ গুপ্ত, ও সংস্কৃত কলেজৰ পণ্ডিতদেৱ বই পড়িয়াই গুৰুদাসবাবু বাদ্ৰালা শিখেন, স্নতবাং সংস্কৃতবহুল সাধুভাষাৰ উপৰ তাঁহাৰ বেশী শ্ৰদ্ধা ছিল। মাইকেল ও হেমচন্দ্ৰৰ বই তিনি খুব ভালিবাসিতেন, অনেক সময়ে লম্বা লম্বা বক্তৃতা আওড়াইতেন। কিন্তু একখানা বড় আশ্চৰ্য্য বই তাঁহাৰ খুব মুখস্থ ছিল, তিনি সময়ে সময়ে সমস্তটা আওড়াইয়া শুনাইতেন, সেই বইখানাৰ নাম ছুচুন্দবী-বৰ কাব্য। কাৰ লেখা জানি না, অনেকে বলে বামগতি ন্যাযবন্ন মহাশয়েৰ লেখা, অনেকে বলে, সংস্কৃত কলেজৰ আৰ কোন পণ্ডিতেৰ লেখা, উদ্দেশ্য শুধু মাইকেলৰ মেঘনাদ-বৰকে ব্যঙ্গ কৰা। ছুচুন্দবী শব্দেৰ বাদ্ৰালা অৰ্থ ছুঁচো, বইখানিৰ এক সৰ্গ বই লিখা হয় নাই, কিন্তু সমস্ত সৰ্গটি গুৰুদাসবাবু মুখস্থ বলিতে পাৰিতেন। তিনি মাৰো মাৰো নিজে কবিতা লিখিতেন এবং অন্যেৰ কবিতা পৰীক্ষা কৰিয়া দিতেন।

গুৰুদাসবাবু সাধুভাষা ভালিবাসিলেও নিজে যখন বাদ্ৰালা বই লিখিতে বসিয়াছিলেন, তখন কিন্তু তত কড়া সংস্কৃত ব্যবহাৰ কৰিতেন না, চলিত কথাই ব্যবহাৰ কৰিতেন। কিন্তু সেগুলি প্ৰায়ই সংস্কৃত হইতে নেওয়া, তাঁহাৰ ‘জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম’ নামে একখানি বই আছে, ইংৰাজী দৰ্শনশাস্ত্ৰেৰ মত লেখা, ইহাৰ ভাষাটা বেশ পৰিষ্কাৰ। শিক্ষাবিস্তাৰ-সম্বন্ধে তাঁহাৰ আৰ একখানি বই ছিল, তিনি প্ৰায়ই কলিকাতা বিশ্ব-বিদ্যালয়েৰ শিক্ষা-প্ৰণালী সমৰ্থন কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন, প্ৰণালীও ঐ, বীতিও ঐ, বিষয়গুলিও ঐ। তবে কলিকাতা বিশ্ব-বিদ্যালয়েৰ পাঠ্যপুস্তক-বিষয়ে এবং কোন্ পুস্তকেৰ কি বিষয় পড়াইতে হইবে, সে বিষয়ে তাঁহাৰ যথেষ্ট মতভেদ ছিল। বাদ্ৰালা অক্ষৰ যে দেবনাগৰী হইতে উৎপন্ন হইয়াছে, তাহা প্ৰমাণ কৰিবাব জন্য তিনি একখানা খুব বড় বই লিখিয়াছিলেন, তাহাৰ ভাষা কিন্তু জ্ঞান ও কৰ্মেৰ ভাষাৰ মত সহজ নহে। তিনি বাদ্ৰালা যে দেবনাগৰী হইতে আসিয়াছে, ইহা প্ৰমাণ কৰিবাব জন্য যথেষ্ট চেষ্টা কৰিয়াছেন, কিন্তু ইতিহাস তাঁহাৰ বিৰোধী। তেৰোণা অক্ষৰ গোল অক্ষৰেৰ অনেক আগে। অক্ষৰশাস্ত্ৰেৰ যতই আলোচনা অধিক হইতে লাগিল এবং ভিন্ ভিন্ সময়েৰ অক্ষৰেৰ লতা অৰ্থাৎ chart বাহিৰ হইতে লাগিল, ততই ও কথাটা ইতিহাসসিদ্ধ নয় প্ৰমাণ হইতে লাগিল। কিন্তু সাৰ গুৰুদাস শেষ পৰ্য্যন্ত বিশ্বাস কৰিতেন, দেবনাগৰী আদি অক্ষৰ, তাহা হইতে বাদ্ৰালা বাহিৰ হইয়াছে। এই সংস্কাৰেৰ বশবৰ্ত্তী হইয়া তিনি যখন ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰ ছিলেন, তখন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে আদেশ বাহিৰ হইয়াছিল, যে কেহ সংস্কৃত লইবে, তাহাৰে দেবনাগৰী অক্ষৰে লিখিতে হইবে। কৰেৰ বৎসৰ এবিয়া বাদ্ৰালানয় কান্ধাকাটি পড়িয়া গেল, ছেলেৰা শ্বেট-পেন্সিল লইয়া ছাপা দেবনাগৰী বই দেখিয়া ক, খ, গ, ঘ, কুঁদিতে লাগিল, কাৰণ, বাদ্ৰালাদেশে ত আৰ দেবনাগৰী অক্ষৰ শিকাইবাব গুৰুদাসৰ পাওয়া যায় না, বেহাতে ধৰিয়া ছেলেদেৰ দেবনাগৰী অক্ষৰ লেখা শেখাইবে? বাহা হউক, ৫৭ বৎসৰ পনে দেবনাগৰী অক্ষৰ পৰীক্ষা নিৰ্দিষ্ট হইবাব আগে কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ সিণ্ডিকেট ও-নিয়ম বন বনিয়া দিলেন, তাহান পৰ গুৰুদাসবাবু ও সাবদাৰাবু দু’জনে “একলিপি-বিস্তাৰ সমিতি” তে যোগ দিলেন, সান্না ভাবতবৰ্ষে একলিপি এক অক্ষৰ হইবে এবং সে অক্ষৰ হিন্দী, এই ব্যাপাৰটা হিন্দুহান হইতেই

বাহিন হইয়াছিল, হিন্দুস্থানীবা খুব খুসী হইয়া গেল। গুৰদাসবাবু অনেক সময়ে বাদ্ৰালা চিঠি দেবনাগৰী অকৰে লিখিতেন। একলিপি-বিজ্ঞান সমিতি এখনও ভীনিত আছে, কিন্তু মুনুৰুপ্ৰাণ। কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে বিহাৰ, উডিস্যা ও নেদুৰ্গ বাহিন হইয়া যাওযাৰ পৰ বাদ্ৰালান আৰ দেবনাগৰী-বিভীষিকা হইবাব কাৰণ নাই। আৰও কাৰণ নাই, সংস্কৃতত ভ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে উঠিতে চলিল, দেবনাগৰ অক্ষৰেৰ আৰ দৰবাৰ বি ? এইখানে বলিয়া নাথি, অনেকৰ সংস্কান, দেবনাগৰ অক্ষৰই সংস্কৃতৰ আদি অকৰ। সেটা বড় ভুল। সংস্কৃত ভাষাৰ অনেক উন্নতি হইলে পৰ বলন-বন্দী হইতে আৰত হয়—বৰ্ণমালা আনন্ত হয়, স্তব্ধাং প্ৰাচীনকালে সংস্কৃত নানা বৰ্ণমালাৰ লেখা হইত, যথা—অশোক অকৰ অথবা ব্ৰাহ্মী, খৰোষ্ঠী, পুৰবসাদী প্ৰভৃতি, তাৰ পৰ কুশান অকৰ, তাৰ পৰ গুপ্ত অকৰ, তাৰ পৰ সাবদা কুটিল ও শ্ৰীহৰ্ষ অকৰ, তাৰ পৰ বাদ্ৰালা, উডিয়া, ত্ৰিহতি, হিন্দী, মাৰোয়াড়ী, কাশ্মীৰী, পাঞ্জাবী, সিন্ধী, গুজৰাটী, মাৰাট্টী, ত্ৰৈলক্ষী, দ্ৰাবিড়ী, কৰ্ণাটী, সিংহলী, ব্ৰহ্ম, শ্যাম, নেওয়াৰী, তিব্বতী ইত্যাদি বহুসংখ্যক। হিন্দীৰ নব্যে যেটা একটু পৰিকাব, তাৰ নাম দেবনাগৰী, যেটা জডান, তাৰ নাম কাইতি। পাহাড়ে দুই বকম হবপ চলিত আছে,—একটাব নাম শাস্ত্ৰী হবপ, আৰ একটাব নাম দেশী বা পাহাড়ী। শাস্ত্ৰী হবপে সংস্কৃত লেখা হয়। মহাবাট্ট দেশে দুই বকম অক্ষৰ চলিত আছে,—একটাব নাম মোড়ী আৰ একটাব নাম বালবোৰ। বালবোৰ অক্ষৰে সংস্কৃত লেখা ও ছাপা হয়। স্তব্ধাং যাঁবা ননে কবেন, দেবনাগৰীই সংস্কৃতৰ আদি অকৰ, তাঁহাদেব কথাটা ঠিক নয়।

গুৰদাসবাবু একখানি পাটীগণিত লিখিয়াছিলে, বইখানি অল্পবিস্তৰ বিক্ৰয় হইয়াছিল। বইখানি যেকপ পৰিকাব এবং সবল ববিয়া লেখা, অৰিব বিক্ৰয় হওবাই উচিত ছিল, কিন্তু গুৰদাসবাবু ত শিক্ষা-বিভাগেৰ লোক ছিলেন না, তাই কেমন কবিয়া বিজ্ঞাপন দিয়া বই চালাইতে হয়, তাহা হয় ত জানিতেন না, নয় জানিবাও ব বিতেন না, নয় বা কবা উচিত ননে কবিতেন না। কিন্তু যখন তিনি Central Text Book Committeeৰ প্ৰেসিডেণ্ট হইলেন তখন সেই বই ছাপান বক কবিয়া দিলেন। এই Text Book Committeeতে গুৰদাস বাবুৰ ক্ষমতা আগবা খুব দেখিয়াছি, তিনি ৫টাৰ সময়ে কমিটীতে আসিতেন, ৭। টা-৮ টা পৰ্যন্ত কমিটীৰ কাৰ্য্য কবিতেন, একটুমাত্ৰ বিবজ্ঞ হইতেন না। যদিও বিবজ্ঞ হইবাব যথেষ্ট কাৰণ থাকিত, অন্যান্য মেম্বৰবা বিবজ্ঞ বা ক্লান্ত হইয়া উঠিয়া যাইতেন, গুৰদাসবাবু যাইতেন না। আৰও এক কথা বলিয়া নাথি, অন্য জাতিৰ মেম্বৰবা উঠিয়া যাইতেন, ব্ৰাহ্মণবা যাইতেন না, সাবদাবাবু বলিতেন, ব্ৰাহ্মণদেব উপোগ কবাব ধাত, আপনাৰা থাকতে পাবেন, আপনাৰা থাকুন, আগি চল্লুম। Central Text Book কমিটীতে একখানি বই পাশ হইলে সেই গ্ৰন্থকাৰেৰ কতকটা অনুসংস্থান হইত এবং অনেকৰ তাহাতেই চলিত, স্তব্ধাং অনেকৰই মত ছিল বইখানা নিতান্ত খাপাপ না হইলে কমিটীৰ বই পাশ কবা উচিত। এক জনেৰ সে ভাব ছিল না। তিনি বলিতেন, যখন ছেলেদেব শিক্ষা দিতে হইবে, তখন ভুল জিনিষ তাহাদেব শিক্ষা দেওয়া উচিত নয়, মন্দ জিনিষ শিক্ষা দেওয়া উচিত নয়। তিনি অত্যন্ত কড়া কবিয়া বই পৰীক্ষা কবিতেন। তিনি আৰও বলিতেন, যাহাব বই পড়াইবে, তাহাব খুব একটা নাম-সন্মান থাকা চাই, “গ্যাবাৰ্ণি অব এ নেম” চাই। বিদ্যাসাগৰ মহাশয় বই লিখিয়াছিলে, তিনি দেশেৰ গুৰু হইবাব উপযুক্ত, তাঁহাব বই খুব চলিয়াছিল, তাই বলিয়া ধাপবাজা গোবিন্দপুৰেৰ মধ্য-বাদ্ৰালা স্কুলেৰ দ্বিতীয় পণ্ডিত পৈতৃক ব্ৰাহ্মোত্তৰ বকক দিয়া একখানি বই ছাপাইয়াছে, সেখানি যে চালাইতে হইবে, ইহাব মানে কি ? নিৰ্ভুল ও নিৰ্দোষ সে বই ত হইতেই পাবে না। কাৰণ, সে পণ্ডিতেৰ লেখাপডাব দৌড কতটুকু। এই নিয়ে Central Text Book কমিটীতে অনেক বাগডা-বিবাদ হইত। গুৰদাসবাবু অনেক সময়ে অপৰূপাত বিচাৰ কবিতেন, অনেক সময়ে দয়াপবৰশ

হইয়া বই পাশ কৰিয়া দিতেন। গুৰুদাসবাবু অনেক বই পড়িতেন, কিন্তু বলিতে কি, এই এক ব্যক্তি ছাড়া আৰু কেই ভাল কৰিয়া বই পড়িতেন না, উপৰোৰ অনুৰোধ ইত্যাদি নানা কাৰণে বই পাশ কৰিবৰ চেষ্টা কৰিতেন। ৫১৬ বৎসৰ Text Book কমিটীৰ প্ৰেসিডেণ্টগিৰি কৰাৰ পৰা লৰ্ড কাৰ্জনেৰ গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট বলিলেন, এই কমিটীগুলি official হওঁয়া উচিত, অৰ্থাৎ Director সাহেব ইহাৰ প্ৰেসিডেণ্ট হওঁয়া উচিত। গুৰুদাসবাবু presidency resign কৰিলেন। তাহাৰ পৰা হইতেই Director সাহেব প্ৰেসিডেণ্ট। পূৰ্বেৰ প্ৰায় কলিকাতা যুনিভাৰ্চিটীৰ Fellowৰাই Text Book কমিটীৰ মেম্বৰ হইতেন। Director ক্ৰমশঃ অনেক সময়ে গবৰ্ণ কৰিয়া বলিতেন, বাঙালীৰ Text Book কমিটীৰ মত সম্ভাৱিত কমিটি খুব কম আছে। তাহাৰ পৰা non-official chairman থাকিত। সে কমিটীৰ একটা মৰ্যাদা, একটা মান ছিল। এখন ওটা শিক্ষা-বিভাগেৰ ব্যাপাৰ হইয়া পড়িবাছে।

বহুবনপুৰ হইতে ফিৰিয়া আসিয়া হাইকোর্টে ওকালতী কৰাৰ ২১৩ বৎসৰ পৰেই গুৰুদাস কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ ফেলো হইলেন। ফেলো হইয়া অবধি তিনি যথানিৰ্দিষ্ট সময়ে সেনেটেৰ সমস্ত মিটিংএ উপস্থিত হইতেন এবং মিটিংএৰ কাৰ্য্যে সহায়তা কৰিতেন। অৱদিনেৰ মৰ্য্যে এই বৎসৰ এই কমিটীৰ, পৰা বৎসৰ আৰু এক কমিটীৰ, তৎপৰবৎসৰ অন্য কমিটীৰ মেম্বৰ হইয়া সিণ্ডিকেটেৰ মেম্বৰ হইলেন। সিণ্ডিকেটেৰ মেম্বৰ হইয়া তিনি তাঁহাৰ কাৰ্য্য খুব মনোযোগ দিয়া কৰিতেন। তখন খুব বড় বড় লোকই সিণ্ডিকেটেৰ মেম্বৰ হইতেন, যথা—ডাষ্টিং চফ্ৰমাৰ ঘোষ, ডব্লিউ সি ব্যানার্জী, হেন্ৰী কটন। তাঁহাৰা বড় বড় কথাৰ খুব বিচাৰ কৰিতেন। তাঁহাদেৰ এইকপ বাদানুবাদ প্ৰায়ই হইত। সিণ্ডিকেটেৰ যা নিত্যবাৰী, তাহাৰ ভাৱ বেজিষ্ট্ৰেৰ উপৰই ছিল। বেজিষ্ট্ৰেৰ বাহা কৰিতেন, তাঁহাৰা তাহাই গল্পৰ কৰিয়া দিতেন। গুৰুদাসবাবু সিণ্ডিকেটে গৈলে বেজিষ্ট্ৰেৰ অনেক সময়ে তাঁহাৰ সহিত পৰামৰ্শ কৰিয়া কাৰ্য্য কৰিতেন। স্মৃতিৰূপে ক্ৰমে সিণ্ডিকেটে গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য প্ৰতিপত্তি হইল। ১৮৮৯ খৃষ্টাব্দে সাৰ আশুতোষ ফেলো হইয়াই সিণ্ডিকেটে প্ৰবেশ কৰেন এবং সিণ্ডিকেটেৰ অনেক কাৰ্য্য তিনি কৰিতে থাকেন। পৰীক্ষক নিয়োগ কৰা, লোকজন নিয়োগ কৰা, বই বান্ধা, examination moderate কৰা,—এগুলি আস্তে আস্তে ৮১০ বৎসৰেৰ মৰ্য্যে সম্পূৰ্ণ ৰূপে সাৰ আশুতোষেৰ হাতে পড়িয়া গেল। ১৮৯০ খৃষ্টাব্দে সাৰ গুৰুদাস বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰ হইলেন। এই উচ্চপদে বাঙালীৰ নিয়োগ এই সৰ্ব্বপ্ৰথম, স্মৃতিৰূপে দেশে একটা খুব সৌভাগ্য পড়িয়া গেল। গুৰুদাসবাবু প্ৰথম ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলাৰ হইয়াছেন এবং লাট 'সাহেবেৰ' পাশে দাঁড়াইয়া বক্তৃতা কৰিয়াছেন। সেকালে লাটসাহেবেৰ পাশে দাঁড়াইয়া বক্তৃতা কৰা একটা মন্ত গৌৰবেৰ বিষয় ছিল। গুৰুদাসবাবু ৩ বৎসৰ কাল এই কাৰ্য্য কৰিয়াছিলেন, প্ৰথম নিয়োগ হয় ২ বৎসৰেৰ জন্য, ২ বৎসৰ চলিয়া গৈলে তাঁহাকে আৰাৰ ২ বৎসৰেৰ জন্য নিয়োগ কৰা হয়, কিন্তু তৃতীয় বৎসৰেৰ শেষে তিনি পদত্যাগ কৰেন। গভৰ্ণমেণ্টেৰ সঙ্গ কৌনকপ মনোমালিন্য ইহাৰ কাৰণ নহে, কেন না, গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট হইতে তাঁহাকে পুনঃ পুনঃ পদত্যাগপত্ৰ প্ৰত্যাহাৰ কৰিতে বলা হয়। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ ভিতৰে কোন কেলেঙ্কাৰীতে তিনি পদত্যাগ কৰেন।

.. .. . কিন্তু সে যে কি, তিনি কাহাৰেও বলেন নাই। লোকে তাহাই সন্দেহ কৰে, উহাই তাঁহাৰ পদত্যাগেৰ কাৰণ।

সাৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ যুনিভাৰ্চিটীৰ ক্ৰিয়াকলাপেৰ কথা সিণ্ডিকেটেৰ মিনিটে যথেষ্ট আছে, আমাদেৰ এখানে সে সকল কথা তোলা পুনৰুক্তিমাত্ৰ। তিনি বিচাৰাসনে বসিয়া যেকপ দক্ষতাৰ সহিত কাৰ্য্য কৰিয়াছেন, তাহাও সকলেৰ স্মৃতিৰূপে। তিনি অপক্ৰপাত বিচাৰ কৰিতে খুব চেষ্টা কৰিতেন, সে বিষয়ে কাহাৰও সন্দেহ নাই এবং মোকদ্দমাটা তলাইয়া বুঝিবাবও খুব চেষ্টা কৰিতেন। তবে “মুনীনাথ

মতিভাঃ।” তাঁহান কোন কোন নাম প্ৰিভি কাউন্সিল হইতে দিদিয়া আসিগাছে এবং ২১৪টা নজীৰ পৰেব নজীৰে নামচ হইয়াছে। বাবুদৰ্গ দৰিহত গোনটে এইকপ হইয়া থাকে।

‘সাহেবদেব’ গায়ে বানহানে গাব ওকদাস অনেক সান্নে খুন সাহসেব পৰিচয় দিয়াছেন। প্ৰথম স্বদেশী আন্দোলনেৰ সময়ত গাব ওকদাসও গভৰ্ণমেণ্টেৰ নিয়-নয়ত পড়িয়াছিলেন। সেই সময়ৰ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টেৰ চিক সেফেটাদী তাহানে ভাবিয়া পাঠান এবং এদটো অশিষ্ট আচৰণ কৰেন। তাহাতে ওকদাসবাবু তাহানে বনিয়াছিলেন, “আপনি যেমন গভৰ্ণমেণ্টেৰ উচ্চপদস্থ কৰ্মচাৰী, আমিও তেনে His Majesty’s সৰ্ভেণ্টেৰ নামে এক জন। আমি আপনাব নিৰ্ঘট হইতে একপ বানহান প্ৰত্যাশা বদি নাই এবং আপনি ভাঙ্গিয়া পাঠাইলেন আমি আন আসিব না।”

কোন মিটিংএ ভাবিলে ওকদাসবাবু নিশ্চয়ই সেখানে যাইতে অন্যথা বসিতেন না। মহানন্দী পাঠশালাৰ প্ৰাইজ বিতৰণে প্ৰতিদ্বন্দ্বি যাইতেন। মানিবেলভাঙ্গান স্কুলটোৰ তিনি খুন ভান-বাসিতেন। প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীৰ চেনদিগৰে তিনি ২১৩ ঘণ্টা বনিয়া পড়াইতেন। প্ৰাইজ ডিষ্ট্ৰিবিউশানেৰ সময়ত ব্যবস্থা নিজে কৰিতেন এবং নিজে উপস্থিত থাকিতেন। ভাইস-চ্যান্সলাৰেৰ পদত্যাগ কৰাৰ পৰ তিনি আন বন্ধনও মিটিংমেণ্টেৰ মেম্বৰ হইলেন নাই। বেহ চিন্দ কৰিলে বলিতেন, একদাৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ কৰ্ত্ত্ব বনিয়া আসিগা আন সেখানে যাওনা চিন্দ নহ। ‘সাহেবদা’ বেহ এমন বান না, আনাবও যাওনা উচিত নহ। বিত্ত প্ৰত্যেক সেনেটৰ মিটিংএ যাইতেন, সন বোর্ডেৰ মিটিংএ যাইতেন, ফেকাল্টিৰ মিটিংএ যাইতেন, সাহিত্য-পৰিষদেৰ অনেক মিটিংএ যাইতেন, আন গাঁৱৰণে যে সবল সভা-সমিতিতে ডাকিত, তাহাতেও যাইতেন। তবে পেন্সান লওয়াৰ পৰ হইতে তিনি কোন সভা-সমিতিতে আন সভাপতিত্ব বনিতে নাজী হইতেন না, এমন বি, স্কুলেৰ পানিতোষিব দানেও সভা-পতিত্ব কৰিতেন না। অনেকে আছেন সভাপতি না হইলে সভায় যাইতে চাহেন না, গাব ওকদাসেৰ কিন্তু তাহা ছিল না, তিনি এমনি যাইতেন। এবৰান জানি, প্ৰায় ৪০ বৎসৰ পূৰ্বে গড়পাৰে কোন ভদ্ৰলোকৰ বাডীতে ছেলেদেব এক সভা হয়। তৰ্ক হয় জাতিৰ উৎপত্তি লইয়া, সেখানে ওকদাস-বাবু বেশ উৎসাহেৰ সহিত সভায় কাৰ্য্যে সহায়তা কৰিয়াছিলেন।

কেহ কোন বই পাঠাইলে ওকদাসবাবু স্বহস্তে তাহাৰে লিখিতেন,—“আপনাব প্ৰদত্ত উপহাৰ আমি সাদৰে গ্ৰহণ কৰিলাম” এবং ২১৪টি কথা বনিয়া তাহাৰে উৎসাহ দিতেন। তিনি সবল প্ৰকাৰ সভা-সমিতিতে যাইতেন বলিয়া “বন্দবাসী” তাঁহাৰে ঠাটা বনিয়া বলিয়াছিল, “ওকদাস-বাবু আলু তবকাৰী, ঝোলেও চলেন, ঝালেও চলেন, চৰ্চৰ্চডিতেও চলেন।” “বন্দবাসী”ৰ ব্যঙ্গ কবাটা ভাল হয় নাই, তাঁহাৰ মত পদস্থ পণ্ডিত ব্যক্তি সভায় গেলে যে আনন্দ ও উৎসাহ হয়, সে বিষয়ে সন্দেহ নাই, সেটা তাঁহান একটা প্ৰবান গুণ বলিয়া আমবা মনে কৰি।

গাব ওকদাস যখন যুনিভাৰসিটি কমিশনেৰ মেম্বৰ ছিলেন, তখন তিনি একাই সবলেৰ বিপোর্টেৰ বিকল্পে মত প্ৰকাশ কৰেন। শিক্ষিত দৰিদ্ৰ-সম্প্ৰদায়েৰ জন্য তিনি বেশী পৰিমাণে ওকালতী কৰেন, কিন্তু গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট তাঁহাৰ কথা খুব আগ্ৰহেৰ সহিত শুনিয়াছিলেন বটে, কিন্তু কাৰ্য্যে সেকপ কিছুই কৰেন নাই। তাঁহাৰ সেবাবকাৰ “ডিসেণ্ট” পড়িয়া ভাবতবৰ্ষেৰ লোক বিস্মিত হইয়া গিয়াছিল।

ওকদাসবাবু উকীল অবস্থায় এবং জজ অবস্থায় অনেক দৰিদ্ৰ ছাত্ৰেৰ স্কুলেৰ ফি দিতেন। তাহাতে তাঁহাৰ বেশ দু’পয়সা খৰচ হইত। স্বদেশী আন্দোলনেৰ সময়ে অত্যাচাৰপীড়িত যুবকদেব তিনি অনেক সাহায্য কৰিয়াছিলেন, কিন্তু পেন্সান লওয়াৰ পৰ তাঁহাকে বাধ্য হইয়া হাত কিছু খাট কৰিতে হইয়াছিল।

গুৰুদাসবাবু যদিও 'সাহেবদেব' সঙ্গে অনেক বাগডা কৰিয়াছেন, তাই বলিয়া তাঁহাৰ বাজ-ভক্তি যে কিছু কম ছিল, তাহা বলিতে পাবা যায় না। কাৰণ, জাৰ্মান যুদ্ধে ইংৰাজেৰ মঙ্গলকামনা কৰিয়া কালীঘাটে যে থকাও যন্ত্ৰেৰ আয়োজন কৰা হয়, তাহাতে সাব গুৰুদাস খুব আগ্ৰহ দেখাইয়া-ছিলেন এবং যত দিন যুদ্ধ ছিল ত্ৰুতি সপ্তাহে কালীঘাটে পূজা দিয়াছেন শুনা যায়।

ছেলেদেব জন্য বাপেৰ যা কিছু কৰা উচিত, গুৰুদাসবাবু তাঁহাৰ ছেলেদেব জন্য সে সব কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন। তিনি তাহাদেব লেখাপড়া দেখিতেন এবং পড়াইতেন, ভাল যবে সকলেৰ বিবাহ দিয়াছেন, সকলেবই একাটি একাটি স্বতন্ত্ৰ বাডী কৰিয়া দিয়াছেন এবং বিষয়-আশয় যা ছিল, নিজে থাকিতেই ছেলেদেব ভাগ কৰিয়া দিয়া গিয়াছেন। তিনি নিজে যত দিন ছিলেন, ছেলেদিগকে নিজেৰ বাডীতে একানুভুক্ত বাখিয়াছিলেন, তাহাৰ পৰ কি হইয়াছে জানি না।

পূৰ্বেই বলিয়াছি, সাব গুৰুদাসেৰ গাছপালা এবং বাগান কৰাৰ খুব সখ ছিল। তিনি কাঁচডা-পাডাৰ ষ্টেশন হইতে কিছু দূৰে বাঘেৰ খালেৰ উপৰ এক লগ্ধে ৭০ বিঘা জমী লইয়া চাষবাস আৰম্ভ কৰিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহাৰ তৃতীয় পুত্ৰ উপেনবাবু প্ৰথম প্ৰথম প্ৰতি বৰিবাবেই সেখানে যাইতেন ও সমস্ত দিন থাকিতেন, অনেক পয়সা খৰচ কৰিয়া কাঁটা তাৰ দিয়া সমস্ত জমী ঘেৰাইয়াছিলেন এবং যুবোপীষ প্ৰণালীতে চাষবাসেৰ উদ্যোগ কৰিয়াছিলেন, কিন্তু ২১৩ বৎসৰেৰ পৰ তিনি সে সমস্ত জমী এক সিঙিকেটেৰ হস্তে সমৰ্পণ কৰেন, কতকগুলি যুবক তাঁহাৰ স্বৰ্গে স্বৰ্গবান্ হইয়া সেখানে কিছুদিন চাষবাস কৰে। কাঁচডাপাডা অনেক দূৰ, নিজে দেখিতে পাবেন না বলিয়া সেখানকাৰ চাষবাস হইল না, গুৰুদাসবাবুৰ ইহা ধাৰণা হইয়াছিল, তাই তিনি আৰাৰ বিডিতি ষ্টেশন হইতে কিছু দূৰে ২০ বিঘা জমী লইয়া বাগান কৰিতে আৰম্ভ কৰেন। বিডিতি কলিকাতা হইতে ৭১৮ মাইল, তিনি নিজেই সেখানে যাইতেন, জমী লইতে তাঁহাকে বেশ কষ্ট পাইতে হইয়াছিল। কাৰণ, বাঙ্গালাৰ জমীৰ প্ৰত্যেক ইঞ্চি জমীতেই নানা বকম স্বৰ আছে ও নানা বকম বিবাদেৰ বীজ আছে, তিনি সে বাগানটিৰ ভাৰ শেষে এক নাতিৰ উপৰ দেন। বাগান হইতে টাটকা তৰকাৰী পাইলেই গুৰুদাসবাবু খুব খুসী হইতেন, স্ততবাং তাঁহাকে খুসী কৰিতে তাঁহাৰ নাতিৰ বিশেষ কষ্ট পাইতে হয় নাই।

প্ৰথমেই বলিয়াছি, গুৰুদাস যে সময়ে জন্মগ্ৰহণ কৰেন, সেটা বিষয় দোটানাব সময়। গুৰুদাস-বাবুৰ টান হিন্দুযানীৰ দিকে বেশী ছিল এবং তিনি মোটামুটি হিন্দুযানী ভাবে কাটাইয়া গিয়াছেন। কিন্তু তাঁহাৰ জীৱনেৰ শেষ কালে দেশে হিন্দুযানীৰ দিকেৰ টানটা খুব কমিয়া গিয়াছিল। তথাপি গুৰুদাসবাবু নিষ্ঠাবান্ হিন্দুদিগেৰ আদৰ্শস্বৰূপ ছিলেন, এই ঘোৰ বিপ্লবেৰ সময়ে সমুদ্ৰেৰ বাতি-ঘৰেৰ ন্যায় তাঁহাকে দেখিয়াই হিন্দুবা দিগ্‌নিঘ কৰিয়া লইত, তাঁহাৰই পদাঙ্ক অনুসৰণ কৰিবাব চেষ্টা কৰিত। তিনি কিন্তু বোধ হয় যেন একটু টলিয়াছিলেন। তাঁহাৰ আচাৰ-ব্যবহাবে তিনি যেকপ বৰ্ণাশ্ৰম-ধৰ্ম্মেৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰদ্ধাবান্ ছিলেন, বজ্জুতায সকল সময়ে তাহা বাখিতে পাৰিতেন না, সময়ে সময়ে বলিয়া ফেলিতেন, জাতি জিনিষটা না থাকিলেই ভাল হইত। বোধ হয় যেন কতকটা ইংৰাজী শ্ৰোতে তিনি গা ভাসান দিয়াছিলেন। ১৮৫৬ খৃষ্টাব্দে যখন বিদ্যাসাগৰ মহাশয়েৰ মতে শ্ৰীশচন্দ্ৰ বিদ্যাবত্ৰ প্ৰথম বিববা-বিবাহ কৰেন, তখন তাঁহাৰ বাডীতে একটা বিদায় আসে, সে বিদায় তাঁহান মা গ্ৰহণ কৰিয়াছিলেন কি না জানা যায় না, বোধ হয় কৰেন নাই। আশুবাবু যখন আপনাৰ বিববা কন্যাৰ বিবাহ দেন, তখনও গুৰুদাসবাবু বিববা-বিবাহেৰ ঘোৰ বিৰোধী ছিলেন। আশুবাবু এক দিন নিজে আসিয়াছিলেন, এক দিন যুনিভাৰসিটিৰ বেজিষ্ট্ৰাৰ ত্ৰৈলোক্যনাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় আসিয়া-ছিলেন, তখন গুৰুদাসবাবু বলিয়াছিলেন—ছেলেদেব ত হিন্দুযানী গেছে, মেবেদেব নব্যে বডাবডি আছে, সে বৰুন শিথিল হইতে দিলে হিন্দুযানী ডুবিয়া যাইবে। কিন্তু তাঁহান নৃত্যন পূৰ্ব বৎসন ভগদ্ধাত্ৰী পূজাৰ তিনি আশুবাবুকে বাডীতে নিমন্ত্ৰণ কৰিয়া আনিয়াছিলেন এবং নৃত্যন পূৰ্বে ছেলেদেব

বলিয়া গিয়াছিলেন—আমান শ্রাদ্ধ তোনবা যদি আওনাবুকে পনিতোমপূৰ্ণবন খাওনাইত না পান, তবে আমান আপান পনিতুখি হইত না। ইহাতে আমান মান ওকদাসন দোদ দিই না। দানব, তিনি বেকপ ভীষণ দোচানান মানা ভীৰন বুদ্ধ কনিয়া গিয়াছেন এবং যে ভাবে হিন্দুগানী সূৰ্য্যানু-সূক্ষ্মকপে বসন বনিয়া গিয়াছেন, তাহাতে তাঁহান পূৰ্ণ না বনিয়া থাকিতে পান। মান না।

আহানে ওকদাসনাবু অতি নিতাচানী ছিলেন। তিনি দীৰ্ঘকাল বাঁচিয়াছিলেন, এবং তাঁহান কোন ইচ্ছাৰ শিথিল হয় নাই, এ জন্য অনেকে তাঁহানকে চিত্তায়া কবিত, আপনি বি খাইনা থাকেন। তিনি বলিতেন,—হিন্দুগানীতে যে সব তিনিঘন নিদি আছে, আনি যে সব তিনিঘিই খাই, নিত খুন অল্প পনিমাণ। সে বত অয়, অন্য লোনেব শানধা হয় না। এক বান মানি, তিনি চানটি কনিয়া আফ্রন খাইয়া ৪ দিন জীবন দানব বনিয়াছিলেন। তখন তিনি খুন বুদ্ধ হয়েন নাই, তখনও তিনি জজিবতী বনেন। মাচ-মাংস তাঁহান আপতি ছিল না, নিত বৃথা মাংস খাইতেন না, দানী-মাচের মাংস পাইলে আপতি ছিল না, কিন্তু খাইতেন অতি অয়। খাওনান বাঁদানদি থানাতেই যে তিনি দীৰ্ঘজীবন লাভ বনিয়াছিলেন, সে বিঘনে সন্দেহ নাই।

অনেক বয়স পৰ্য্যন্ত তিনি সপ্তাহে এক দিন ঠাণ্ডা গদ্যমান বনিয়া আগিতেন, তাঁহান বাড়ী হইতে গঙ্গা প্রায় ৪ মাইল তফাৎ। সে জন্য বিশ্রাম বনিবান নিমিত্ত তিনি গদ্যতীনে ছোট একটি বাড়ী কনিয়াছিলেন এবং গদ্যতীনের উপন সে বাড়ীতেই তাঁহান দেহত্যাগ হয়। শেষ পৰ্য্যন্ত হিন্দু-গানীতে তাঁহান খুব বিশ্বাস ছিল। হিন্দুদের সংকান—গদ্যাত্ৰা বনিয়া সে নোগী যদি বাড়ী কনিয়া আসে, সে বাড়ীর অমঙ্গল হয়। প্রত্যেক গ্রামেই লোব এইরূপ ২১১ বাড়ী দেখাইয়া দেয় এবং বলে, ইহান পিতামহী গদ্যাত্ৰা হইতে কনিয়া আগিয়াছে, সে জন্য ইহান উচছন্ন গিয়াছে। সে জন্য ওকদাসনাবু গদ্যাত্ৰা কবেন নাই, বাগবাজবেব বাড়ীতে গিয়াছিলেন। সে বাড়ীতে তাঁহান নিবট সৰ্বদাই গীতা, চণ্ডী ও ভাগবত-পাঠ হইত। কেহ গেলে ওকদাস তাঁহান সহিত বেশ গল্প-ওজন কবিতেন। শুনিয়াছি, তিনি মৃত্যুৰ দিন পেন্সনের বিলপানি গই কনিয়া দিয়া গিয়াছিলেন।

সমাজপতি গুরুদাস*

ববীজনাথ ঠাকুর

যিনি একদিকে আচাৰ ও নিষ্ঠাহাবা হিন্দুসমাজেব অকৃত্রিম শ্রদ্ধা আবর্ষণ কনিয়াছেন, অপৰ-দিকে আধুনিক বিদ্যালয়েব শিক্ষায় যিনি সহৎ গৌৰবেব অবিকারী, একদিকে কঠোৰ দাবিদ্রা যাঁহাব অপবিচিত নহে, অন্যদিকে আশঙ্কিত হাবা যিনি সমৃদ্ধিব মৰ্যে উত্তীৰ্ণ, যাঁহাকে দেশেব লোক যেমন সম্মান কবে, বিদেশী বাজপুকষেব। তেমন শ্রদ্ধা কনিয়া থাকে, যিনি কৰ্ত্তৃপক্ষেন বিশ্ৰাসভাজন, অথচ যিনি আশ্রমতের স্বাধীনতা ক্ষুণ্ণ ববেন নাই, নিবপেক্ষ ন্যাববিচাৰ যাঁহাব প্রকৃতিগত ও অভ্যাসগত, নানা বিবোধী পক্ষেন বিনোদনময় যাঁহাব পক্ষে স্বাভাবিক, যিনি স্মরণ্যতাৰ সহিত বাজাব ও প্রকৃতি-সাধাবণেব সম্মাননীয় কৰ্ম্মভাব সমাবা কনিয়া বিচিত্র অভিজ্ঞতাৰ দ্বাবা ঐশ্বর্য্যবান্ অক্ষুণ্ণ অবসৰ লাভ কনিয়াছেন, সেই স্বদেশবিদেশেব শাস্ত্রজ্ঞ পণ্ডিত, সেই ধনসম্পদেব মধ্যেও অবিচলিত, তপোনিষ্ঠ, ভগবৎপৰায়ণ ব্রাহ্মণ শ্রীযুক্ত ওকদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়েব নাম যদি এইখানে

* ১৩১১ সনের ভাদ্র সংখ্যান বঙ্গদর্শনে প্রকাশিত 'স্বদেশী সমাজ' প্রবন্ধ হইতে উদ্ধৃত।

আমি উচ্চাৰণ কৰি, তৰে অনেক পল্লবিত বৰ্ণনাৰ অপেক্ষাও সহজে আপনাবা বুৰিবেন কিংপ সমাজকে আমি প্ৰাৰ্থনীয় ও সম্ভবপৰ জ্ঞান কৰিতেছি। বুৰিতে পাবিবেন, নিজেৰ ব্যক্তিগত সংস্কাৰ, মতামত, আচাৰবিচাৰ লইয়া আমি লেশমাত্ৰ আপত্তি তুলিতে চাহি না—আমি আমাৰ সমস্ত দেশেৰ অভাৱ দেশেৰ প্ৰাৰ্থনা অন্তৰেৰে মধ্য একান্তভাবে উপলব্ধি কৰিয়া নম্ৰভাবে নমস্কাৰেৰ সহিত সমাজেৰ শূন্য বাজতবনে এই দ্বিজোত্তমকে মুক্তকণ্ঠে আহ্বান কৰিতেছি।

জাতীয়শিক্ষায় স্যব গুৰুদাস

হীৰেজনাথ দত্ত

বাজপ্ৰতিনিধিকপে লৰ্ড বাৰ্জ'ন ভাৰতবৰ্ষে যে সকল কীৰ্ত্তি ও অপকীৰ্ত্তি সঞ্চয় কৰিয়া যান, বোধ হয় বঙ্গভঙ্গ (Partition of Bengal) তাহাদেৰ মধ্য প্ৰধান। ঐ বঙ্গভঙ্গেৰ ফলে এদেশেৰ মধ্য একটা বিপুল উত্তেজনা ও আন্দোলনেৰ সূত্ৰপাত হয়। বাঙ্গালীসকলদিগেৰ অদূৰদৰ্শিতাব ঐ আন্দোলন বাঙ্গালীতিৰ উদ্বেল ক্ষেত্ৰ ছাডিয়া শিক্ষাৰ অনুদ্বেল ক্ষেত্ৰে অনবিৰাৰ প্ৰবেশ কৰে। ইহা হইতেই বঙ্গদেশে জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ সূচনা। এই জাতীয় শিক্ষাকে উপলক্ষ্য কৰিয়া স্যব গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়েৰ সহিত আমাৰ ঘনিষ্ঠ পৰিচয়েৰ সূযোগ ঘটাইছিল। এই জীবন-স্মৃতিতে এই বিষয়েৰ কিছু প্ৰসঙ্গ কৰিব। কিন্তু তৎপূৰ্বে ভূমিকা-স্বৰূপ কয়েকটি কথা বলিতে চাই।

স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ শ্ৰীযুক্ত হাৰাণচন্দ্ৰ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়েৰ সহপাঠী বলিয়া এবং কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ যখন তিনি ভাই-চান্সেলাৰ (Vice-Chancellor) ছিলেন সেই সময়ে কোন কোন পৰীক্ষায় আমি কৰ্মক্ষিণ কৃতিত্ব দেখাইয়াছিলাম বলিয়া আমি স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ সহিত অনেক দিন হইতে পৰোক্ষভাবে পৰিচিত ছিলাম, কিন্তু তাঁহাৰ সহিত আমাৰ সাক্ষাৎ-পৰিচয়েৰ সৌভাগ্য হয় সাৰ্বজীৱী লাইব্ৰেৰীৰ বাৰ্ষিক অধিবেশনে পঠিত এব' প্ৰবন্ধ উপলক্ষ্য কৰিয়া। ঐ অধিবেশনে আমি “বাঙ্গালীৰ জাতীয় অভাৱ ও অবস্থা” নাম দিয়া এক স্মদীৰ্ঘ প্ৰবন্ধ পাঠ কৰি। স্যব গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় ঐ সভায় উপস্থিত ছিলেন এবং প্ৰবন্ধপাঠেৰ পৰ প্ৰবন্ধ-পাঠকে অভিনন্দিত কৰিয়া কয়েকটি সাবগৰ্ভ কথা বলেন। তখন তিনি কলিকাতা হাইকোর্টেৰ জজ। আমি বোধ হয় তখন সম্প্ৰতি এটাপি হইয়া কৰ্মক্ষেত্ৰে প্ৰবেশ কৰিয়াছি। প্ৰবন্ধপাঠেৰ ২১৩ দিনেৰ মধ্য স্যব গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় আমাকে তাঁহাৰ চেম্বাৰে ডাকাইয়া লইয়া যান এবং আমাৰ পঠিত প্ৰবন্ধ শীঘ্ৰ সাময়িক পত্ৰে প্ৰকাশিত হইবে জানিয়া দুই চাৰি স্থলে সংযোজন ও সংশোধন কৰিবাব জন্য উপদেশ প্ৰদান কৰেন। বলা বাহুল্য আমি তাঁহাৰ উপদেশ শিবোধাৰ্য্য কৰিয়াছিলাম। এই সময় হইতে আমাৰ প্ৰতি তাঁহাৰ সম্মেহ পক্ষপাত আৰম্ভ হয়। তাঁহাৰ জীৱনেৰ শেষদিন অবধি তাহা হইতে আমি বঞ্চিত হই নাই। (যিনি ন্যায্যপৰতাৰ ক্ষুব্ধাৰ পথে সৰ্ব্বদা বিচৰণ কৰিতেন, তাহাৰ সম্বন্ধে ‘পক্ষপাত’ শব্দ বোধ হয় অযুক্ত হইল, কিন্তু তথাপি উহাৰ প্ৰয়োগেৰ লোভ সংবৰণ কৰিতে পাবিলাম না।)

ইহাৰ পৰ বঙ্গীয় সাহিত্য পৰিষদেৰ সম্পৰ্কে স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ সহিত আমাৰ পৰিচয় আৰম্ভ হয়। পৰিষদেৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা হইতে আমি উহাৰ একজন সেৱক ছিলাম এবং কয়েক

বৎসৰ সম্পাদকতাও কৰিযাছিলাম। স্যৰ গুৰুদাসকে আমবা প্ৰায় প্ৰথম হইতেই মহান ও সদস্যৰূপে পাইযাছিলাম। বাঙ্গালা ভাষা ও সাহিত্যৰ উন্নতি ও শ্ৰীবৃদ্ধিৰ বিষয়ে স্যৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ অক্লান্ত উৎসাহ ও উদ্যম ছিল। তিনি প্ৰথম হইতেই পনিষদেৰ সনস্ত আয়োজনে যোগদান কৰিতেন এবং আমাদিগকে নানাভাবে উৎসাহিত ও প্ৰবৰ্ত্তিত কৰিতেন। আমাৰ বেশ স্মৰণ আছে প্ৰায় ৩২ বৎসৰ পূৰ্বেৰ যখন কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়েৰ মৰ্য্যে আমাদেৰ বঙ্গবাণীৰ বোন বিকৃত আসনও ছিল না তখন তাঁহাবই উদ্যোগে বাঙ্গালাৰে প্ৰবেশিকা পৰীক্ষাৰ বাহন কৰিবান প্ৰস্তাব সেনেটে পেশ কৰা হয়।

আজ বঙ্গভাৰতীৰ সেই দুৰ্ভাগ্যেৰ দিন প্ৰায় অবসান হইযাছে। বিস্ত এজন্য যদি সাৰুবাদ কাহাবও প্ৰাপ্য হয় তবে সৰ্ব্বপ্ৰথমে তাহা স্যৰ গুৰুদাস পাইবেন।

যখন দেশেৰ মধ্যে বঙ্গভঙ্গেৰ পৰ জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ আহ্বান ঘোষিত হইল, তখন আমবা কেহ কেহ সেই ভাকে আশহাৰা হইযা গেলাম। অনেক ছাত্ৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিলেন যে তাঁহাবা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়-কৰ্পী গোলামখানাব সহিত সম্পৰ্ক ৰাখিবেন না। এম. এ ও প্ৰেমচাঁদ ৰায়চাঁদ পৰীক্ষাৰ্থীনা স্থিৰ কৰিলেন যে তাঁহাবা পৰীক্ষাক্ষেত্ৰে উপস্থিত হইবেন না। এই সময়ে জাতীয়-বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়-প্ৰতিষ্ঠা-কল্পে অৰুনা স্বৰ্গ গত স্মৰোচন্দ্ৰ মল্লিক একলক্ষ টাকা দানেৰ প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি কৰিলেন। দেশেৰ মধ্যে বেশ উৎসাহেৰ অনুকূল পৰন বহিতে লাগিল। এই স্মৰোগে একদিন পটলডাঙ্গা গোলদীঘিতে জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ জয় ঘোষণা কৰিবান জন্য এক বিৰাট সভাৰ অনুষ্ঠান হইতেছে। হাইকোর্টেৰ ‘বাৰ’ লাইব্ৰেৰী হইতে আঙতোষ চৌধুৰী প্ৰমুখ নেতৃবৰ্গ উপস্থিত হইয়াছেন। বঙ্গভাৰ য়োত খববেগে বহিয়া ক্ৰমশঃ মন্দীভূত হইযাছে। সভা ভঙ্গ হইবান সময় প্ৰায় উপস্থিত, এমন সময়ে একজন আসিয়া আমায় সংবাদ দিলেন “স্যৰ গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় (ইহাৰ পূৰ্বেই তিনি হাইকোর্টেৰ জজিয়তি হইতে অবসৰ লইযাছেন) আপনাৰ জন্য নিকটেই অবস্থান কৰিতেছেন।” আমি অচিৰে তাঁহাৰ সহিত মিলিত হইলাম। তিনি বলিলেন “আপনাৰ সহিত বিশেষ কথা আছে। হয় আপনাৰ বাডী চলুন, না হয় আমাৰ সঙ্গে আসুন।” আমি তাঁহাৰ সঙ্গে তাঁহাৰ বাডীতে গেলাম। জাতীয় শিক্ষা-সম্বন্ধে অনেকক্ষণ কথাবাৰ্ত্তা হইল। তিনি ধীৰ ও সংযতভাবে ‘সু’ ও ‘কু’ উভয় দিক্ দেখাইযা বুঝাইতে লাগিলেন—জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ উপযোগিতা এবং আশু প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা তিনি নিজেই খ্যাপন কৰিলেন, কিন্তু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়কে বয়কট কৰাৰ প্ৰস্তাব যে অযৌক্তিক তাহাও প্ৰতিপন্ন কৰিলেন। আমি ও আমাৰ সঙ্গীবা তাঁহাকে বলিলাম “বেশ কথা, আপনি আসিয়া এই জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ কণ ধাব হউন এবং এই আন্দোলনকে শুভ পথে পৰিচালিত ককন।” স্যৰ গুৰুদাস ঐকান্তিকভাবে আমাদেৰ সহিত যোগ দিলেন। এই যে তাঁহাৰ সহিত জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ তত্ত্ব গ্ৰথিত হইল, জীবনাৰধি তাহা বিচিহ্ন হই নাই।

ইহাৰ পৰ কত ‘মিটিং’ কত ‘সিটিং’ হইল। কত লোক আসিলেন, কত লোক যাইলেন। কত জনেৰ উৎসাহ-বহি খডেৰ আঙনেৰ ন্যায় উদ্দীপিত ও নিৰ্ব্বাপিত হইল, কিন্তু স্যৰ গুৰুদাস কোন দিন বিচলিত হইলেন না। ধীৰ, স্থিৰ, সংহত, সংযত ভাবে নিজেৰ কৰ্ত্তব্যপথে অগ্ৰসৰ হইতে লাগিলেন। কোন দিন কোন কাৰণে কিঞ্চিন্মাত্ৰও পশ্চাৎপদ হইলেন না।

ইহাৰ পৰ জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ প্ৰণালী, পদ্ধতি ও স্কিম (scheme) স্থিৰীকৃত হইল। উদ্যোক্তাৰা দিনেৰ পৰ দিন সমবেত হইযা আলোচনা, গবেষণা, বাদানুবাদ ও বাগ্ৰবিতণ্ডা কৰিতে লাগিলেন, স্যৰ গুৰুদাস প্ৰায় প্ৰত্যেক মিটিংএ উপস্থিত থাকিয়া এই সকল আলোচনাকে সুপথে পৰিচালিত কৰিয়া একাটি চমৎকাৰ scheme প্ৰস্তুত কৰাইলেন। পৰে শুভদিনে শুভক্ষেণে বঙ্গদেশে জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদ্ (National Council of Education) প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত হইল। শ্ৰীযুক্ত

ব্ৰজেন্দ্ৰকুমাৰ বায়চৌধুৰী ৫ লক্ষ টাকাৰ সম্পত্তি দিলেন। মহাবাজা সূৰ্য্যকান্ত আচাৰ্য্য চৌধুৰী মহাশয় আড়াই লক্ষ টাকাৰ সম্পত্তি দিলেন। স্যব বাসবিহাৰী ঘোষ মহাশয় প্ৰধানতঃ স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰই অনুবোধক্ৰমে জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ সভাপতি হইলেন। স্যব গুৰুদাসকে এই পদে প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত কৰিবাৰ জন্য স্যব বাসবিহাৰী প্ৰমুখ অনেকেই অনেককপ চেষ্টা কৰিলেন, কিন্তু স্যব গুৰুদাস কোনকপ সন্মানেৰ পদ গ্ৰহণ কৰিতে একেবাৰেই অসম্মত হইলেন, কিন্তু তিনি যতদিন জীৱিত ছিলেন শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ কাৰ্য্য-নিৰ্ব্বাহক সমিতিৰ সদস্য থাকিয়া বহু সময় ও শ্ৰম ব্যয়িত কৰিয়া শিক্ষা পৰিষদকে উন্নতি ও অভ্যুদয়েৰ পথে পৰিচালিত কৰিতে লাগিলেন।

১৯০৬ সালে মাৰ্চ মাসে জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদ ১৮৬০ সালেৰ ২১ আইন মতে বেজিষ্টাৰী কৰা হইল। ইহাৰ 'মেমোৰাণ্ডাম' ও নিয়মাবলী বচনায় স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ নিপুণ হস্তেৰ নিদৰ্শন অনেক স্থলেই পাওয়া যায়। জাতীয় শিক্ষা অবশ্য 'on national lines entirely under national control'এ পৰিচালিত হইবে। কিন্তু এই স্থানে স্যব গুৰুদাস একটু বাস্তবিক সংযোগ কৰিলেন। সে বাস্তবিক এখন সকলেৰই স্বসম্মত standing apart from but not in opposition to the Government system, অৰ্থাৎ জাতীয় শিক্ষা সবকাৰী শিক্ষা হইতে ভিন্ন খাতে প্ৰবাহিত হইবে, তৎকৰ্ত্ত্বক কৰলিত হইয়া সৰু-ভাবাপন্ন হইবে না, কিন্তু তাহাৰ সহিত কোন বিৰোধিতাও কৰিবে না। বাস্তবিক বৰ্ত্তমান অবস্থায় ইহাই জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ সুচিত নিয়তি। এই নিয়তিৰ অনুসৰণ কৰিয়াই আজ জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদ সাকল্যমণ্ডিত হইয়াছে এবং বঙ্গবাসীৰ হৃদয়ে একটা মৰ্যাদা ও গৌৰবেৰ স্থান অধিকাৰ কৰিতে পাবিয়াছে। অন্য পক্ষে মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ প্ৰবৰ্ত্তিত অসহযোগ আন্দোলনেৰ উত্তেজনাৰ অনুন্নত জাতীয় শিক্ষাসংঘসমূহ বিপথগামী হইয়া বিপন্ন ও উৎসন্ন হইতে বসিয়াছে।

স্মৰণ বাধিতে হইবে যে জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠা হইতে ৬৭ বৎসৰ পৰ্য্যন্ত ইহাকে অনেক ৰাষ্ট্ৰবাত ও বজ্ৰপাত সহিতে হইয়াছিল। অনেক দিন পৰ্য্যন্ত ৰাজপুৰুষদিগেৰ ইহাৰ প্ৰতি বোম্ব-কষাৰিত দৃষ্টি নিবদ্ধ ছিল। শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ একজন প্ৰধান কৰ্ণধাৰ-ৰূপে এই সমস্তই স্যব গুৰুদাসেৰ গোচৰে আসিত। কিন্তু তিনি তাহাতে দৃকপাত কৰিতেন না। তিনি বলিতেন—“আমাদেৰ দেশেৰ বালক ও যুবকবৃন্দকে আমাদেৰ মতানুযায়ী শিক্ষা দিব। ইহাতে কাহাৰও বাধা দিবাৰ অধিকাৰ নাই এবং কাহাৰও বাধা মানিতে আমবা বাধ্য নহি।” বৰ্ণাভূত শৰীৰে যেমন বৰ্ষ। প্ৰবেশ কৰিতে পাবে না, স্যব গুৰুদাস কৰ্ত্ত্বক অভিগুপ্ত শিক্ষা পৰিষদকেও সেইকপ আমলাতন্ত্ৰেৰ তীব্ৰ বাণ স্পৰ্শ কৰিতে পাবে নাই। আমাৰ স্মৰণ আছে একবাৰ ৰাজপুৰুষেৰা কৈফিয়ৎ চাহিলেন যে ইতিহাসেৰ প্ৰশ্নপত্ৰে এইকপ প্ৰশ্ন কেন কৰা হইল যে আকবৰেৰ প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী, প্ৰধান সেনাপতি ও প্ৰধান অৰ্থ-সচিব কে কে ছিলেন এবং বৰ্ত্তমান আমলেই বা কে কে আছেন? ইহাৰ উত্তৰে অবশ্যই প্ৰতিপন্ন হইত যে, মোগল বাদশাহেৰ আমলে এই সকল দাৰিদ্ৰেৰ পদে হিন্দু কৰ্ম্মচাৰিগণ প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত ছিলেন। কিন্তু এ আমলে তাহাৰ বিপৰীত। এই কৈফিয়তেৰ স্যব গুৰুদাস যে জবাব দিয়াছিলেন তাহাতে প্ৰশ্নকাৰীৰ নিশ্চয়ই চক্ষু স্থিৰ হইয়াছিল।

ইহাৰ পৰ ক্ৰমশঃ ৰাজবোম্ব মন্দীভূত হইল বটে, কিন্তু দেশেৰ মধ্যে জাতীয় শিক্ষাৰ জন্য উৎসাহেৰ বেগও স্তিমিত হইয়া গেল। অনেকেই নিকণ্ণসাহ ও হতোদ্যম হইলেন। কেহ কেহ স্পষ্ট পত্ৰ লিখিয়া শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ সংশ্ৰব পৰিত্যাগ কৰিলেন। অপৰে সম্পূৰ্ণ উদাসীন হইয়া 'মাধ্যস্থ্য' অবলম্বন কৰিলেন। জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদ উঠিয়া যাইবাৰ সম্ভাবনা হইল। কিন্তু এই অবসাদেৰ দিনেও স্যব গুৰুদাস নিৰাশ হইলেন না। বং অধিকতৰ আগ্ৰহেৰ সহিত ইহাৰ বন্ধাকল্পে মনোনিবেশ কৰিলেন। প্ৰথম হইতেই স্যব গুৰুদাস মাসিক ৫০ টাকা কৰিয়া চাঁদা দিতেন। কোন দিন

তাহাব নিকট বিল পাঠাইতে হইত না। তিনি প্রতি মাসেব ২০০ তাৰিখে স্বতঃপ্রবৃত্ত হইয়া অগ্রিম চাঁদাৰ টাকা পাঠাইয়া দিতেন। জীবনের শেষ অবধি এইকপ চলিয়াছিল। প্রথম প্রথম কয়েক বৎসৰ তিনি শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ প্রতিষ্ঠিত বিদ্যালয়ে স্বয়ং অঙ্কশাস্ত্ৰেৰ অধ্যাপনা কৰিতেন। জেজেব মঞ্চ হইতে অবতৰণ কৰিয়া শিক্ষকেৰ কাঠাসনে উপবেশন অনেকেবই প্ৰীতিপ্ৰদ নহে, কিন্তু যতদিন তিনি ঐ কাৰ্য্যেৰ ভাৰ লইয়াছিলেন কোন দিন তাহাকে, অনুপস্থিত বা অমনোযোগী হইতে দেখা যায় নাই। অভিভাবকবৰ্গ কে উৎসাহিত কৰিবাৰ জন্য তিনি তাহাব এক পৌত্ৰকে ঐ বিদ্যালয়ে ভৰ্ত্তি কৰিয়া দিয়াছিলেন, কিন্তু ছাত্ৰেৰ অভাবে কয়েক বৎসৰেৰ ব্যথ চেষ্টাব পৰে আমবা ঐ বিদ্যালয় উঠাইয়া দিতে বাধ্য হই। তখন হইতে শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ প্রধান প্রতিষ্ঠান হইল বঙ্গীয় কাক বিদ্যালয় (Bengal Technical Institute)।

স্যব বাসবিহাবী ঘোষ জীবনাবধি শিক্ষা পৰিষদেৰ সভাপতি ছিলেন। স্যব গুৰুদাসকে অগ্রণী কৰিয়া আমবা একাধিকবাৰ তাহাব নিকট আবেদন কৰিয়াছিলাম যে তিনি যেন (মাসিক চাঁদা যাহা দিতেন তাহাব উপৰ) একটা বড় বকম donation দেন। তাহাতে স্যব বাসবিহাবী ঘোষ বলিয়াছিলেন, “আমাব এই বহু কষ্টে উপার্জিত অর্থ। আৰও কয়েক বৎসৰ দেখি কি ভাবে শিক্ষা পৰিষদ্ পৰিচালিত হয়। পৰে উইলেব দ্বাৰা যথোচিত কৰিয়া যাইব।” স্যব বাসবিহাবী এই প্রতিশ্ৰুতি পালন কৰিয়া গিয়াছেন। তিনি উইলেব দ্বাৰা জাতীয় শিক্ষাব উন্নতিকল্পে প্ৰায় বিশ লক্ষ টাকা দিয়া গিয়াছেন। এই দানেবও মূলে স্যব গুৰুদাস। ঐ দানে স্ৰুপুষ্ট ও সমৃদ্ধ হইয়া জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদ্ আজ কলিকাতাব অদূৰবৰ্ত্তী যাদবপুৰে একশত বিঘা জমিব উপৰ এব প্রকাণ্ড কাক বিদ্যালয় স্থাপন কৰিয়াছে ও পৰিচালন কৰিতেছে। তাহাব যন্ত্ৰশালা, বিজ্ঞানাগাৰ, ওয়াক-সপ, ছাত্ৰনিবাস প্রভৃতি দেখিবাৰ জিনিস। বড়ই আক্ষেপেৰ বিষয় যে স্যব গুৰুদাস স্বচক্ষে তাহাব শ্রমেৰ এই বিপুল সফলতা দেখিয়া যাইতে পাবেন নাই। কিন্তু স্বৰ্গ ও মৰ্ত্ত্যে যদি সম্বন্ধ থাকে, তবে এই কথা নিঃসংশয়ে বলিতে পাৰি যে স্যব গুৰুদাস আজ সপ্ত স্বৰ্গেৰ উৰ্দ্ধতন লোক হইতে এই জাতীয় শিক্ষা পৰিষদ্ ও তাহাব স্ৰ-বিন্যস্ত, স্ৰগঠিত, স্ৰজ্জ্বিত শিক্ষা-প্রতিষ্ঠানেৰ প্ৰতি প্ৰতিনিয়ত আশীৰ্বাদ বৰ্ধণ কৰিতেছেন।

শেষ স্মৃতি

ডাক্তাৰ স্ৰবেশপ্ৰসাদ সৰ্বাধিকাৰী

শেষ ব্যাপি যখন তাহাবে আক্ৰমণ বনে, সেই সন্ময়ে কয়েক সপ্তাহ তাহাব চিকিৎসাৰ ভাৰ আমাব উপৰ পড়। তিনি দিন দিন বোগে ন্নান ও কীণ হইতে লাগিলেন। আনি সেই সন্ময়ে দেখিবাছি ও সদনন্দন বদিবাছি যে, তাহাব শব্দীৰ অপেক্ষা নন বত বড় ছিল। তাহাব তৎকালীন ক্লেশ ও শতনা বৰ্ণনাতীত, দিষ্ট তিনি সে সদন দিন দিন বিকপে দমন বদিবাছিলেন, তাহা চিন্তাবও মৰ্তীত। এত ক্লেশ ও শতনা সত্ত্বেও তিনি সব সন্ময়ে স্নিতমুখে বসুবাৰুবেদেৰ সহিত আলাপ কৰিতেন। আনি বান্ধন অনুমোদ ও চিকিৎসাবাচিত আশ্রা কৰিয়া তাহাকে সবলেৰ সহিত আলাপে নিবৃত্ত বদিত পাৰি নাই। তিনি বলিতেন, প্রাণ মুলিয়া আজ যদি না বহিলাম, তবে বাবে বহিব ? তাহাব

মুখে মৃত্যুর ছায়া, অথবা ভয়ের চিহ্ন এক মুহূর্তেও দেখি নাই। সৰ্ব্বদা নানা কথা, তত্ত্বকথা, ধৰ্মকথা, পবলোকের কথা, সাংসারিক কথা, যবে বাইবে কি বন্দোবস্ত হইবে, এই সকল উপদেশ সন্তানগণকে দিতেন। ছোট বড় সকল বিষয়েই তিনি মনোযোগী ছিলেন—এমন কি, কোন্ বিলুবৃক্ষ হইতে তাঁহার শ্রাদ্ধে যুপকাঠ নিৰ্ম্মিত হইবে, তাহারও উপদেশ তিনি দিয়া গিয়াছিলেন। শেষ দিন পর্য্যন্ত এই ভাব। এই সকল দেখিয়া কি তাঁহার শেষ মহাযাত্রার সূচনা কবিত্তে পারি? নিষেধ সত্ত্বেও তিনি বলিতেন, ‘প্রতিবন্ধক কেন কবিবেন।’ ইহা সাধাবণ ঘটনা নয়। যত ক্রেশ অধিক হইতে লাগিল, মানসিক বল ততই বেশী হইতে লাগিল। প্রতি দিন গীতা পাঠ ও শ্রবণ নিত্যক্রিয়া যেমন পূৰ্বে হইয়া আসিতেছিল, এখনও তাহাই চলিতে লাগিল। মৃত্যুর দিন সিণ্ডিকেটের পত্রবাহক হইয়া গেলাম ও তাঁহাদের পত্র পড়িয়া শুনাইলাম। সিণ্ডিকেট লিখিয়াছেন যে, তাঁহাৰা তাঁহার পীড়ার জন্য দুঃখিত এবং ভগবানের কাছে প্রার্থনা কবিয়াছেন, যাহাতে তিনি নিৰাময় হইয়া তাঁহা-দিগকে মন্ত্ৰণা ও পবামৰ্শ দিতে পাবেন। পত্র শুনিয়া তিনি বলিলেন—‘উত্তৰ লিখিয়া নাও।’ মৃত্যুর ৮।১০ ঘট্টা পূৰ্বে যিনি এইরূপ পত্র লিখাইতে পাবেন, তিনি অলৌকিক ব্যক্তি, বদ্বৈৰ প্রতি গৃহে তাঁহার আদৰ্শ বাখা অবশ্য কৰ্ত্তব্য। এই উত্তৰ তিনি লিখাইলেন,—

I am indeed deeply grateful to you and your esteemed colleagues for that touching message of hope

May the abundant grace of my Maker and the over-flowing sympathy of my fellowmen which have so far sustained me during trial and tribulations continue to be vouchsafed to me in going through whatever has still to be faced

যখন তাঁহার পেন্সনের শেষ চেক উপস্থিত তিনি জিজ্ঞাসা কবিলেন, “এখন কি চেক সহি কবিত্তে আমি উপযুক্ত?” বহু কষ্টে চেক স্বাক্ষর কবিলেন। সেই চিৰাভ্যস্ত লেখায় স্বাক্ষর কবিলেন। তৎপৰ বলিলেন,—“ব্যাঙ্ক কি চেক গ্রহণ কবিবে? এইবার আমার শেষ পেন্সন হইয়া গেল।” তাৰ পৰ হইতে সাংসারিক কথা আর তিনি কহেন নাই। বলিলেন,—“গঙ্গাব দিকে বাতায়ন খুলিয়া দাও।” গঙ্গাব স্রোত নিবীক্ষণ কবিত্তে কবিত্তে তাঁহার মুখচছবি কি স্বৰ্গীয় শ্রী দ্বাৰা স্বৰ্গীয় ভাবে উদ্ভাসিত হইল, তাহা আর জীবনে ভুলিতে পারিব না। তাঁহার মুখে মৃত্যুর বিভীষিকা এক মুহূর্তও দেখি নাই। শেষ ক্ষণ পর্য্যন্ত তিনি সজ্ঞান ছিলেন—মনে মনে ইষ্টনাম জপে সদাই নিবত। যে মৃত্যু পার্শ্ব দাঁড়াইয়া তাঁহাকে আক্রমণ কবিত্তে প্রস্তুত, সেই মৃত্যুকে কিকপে বন্ধুভাবে আলিঙ্গন কবিয়াছিলেন তাহা দেখিবার ও শুনিবার বিষয়। আশা কবি এই পবিত্র চিত্র কোন সাহিত্য-শিল্পী ভালরূপ ফলাইতে পারিবেন। আমবা স্বার্থপৰ, নিজ নিজ স্বার্থসিদ্ধির জন্য সদাই প্রস্তুত। এই মহান চিত্র সন্মুখে বাখিলে আমাদের বিশেষ উপকাৰ হইবে। আমাদের আত্মা এই দেহরূপ পাত্ৰ-নিবাসে ক্ষণেকের তৰে—তাঁহার নিজ গৃহ স্বৰ্গে—এই ভাব মধুবতৰ ও পবিস্ফুট হইবে। আমার এই আকাঙ্ক্ষা কোন সাহিত্যিক পূরণ কবিবেন প্রার্থনা কবি।

A TRIBUTE

LORD SINHA

When I first came to know that great man, he was still a member of the Vakil bar. I saw him raised to the Bench and practised before him as an advocate all the years he was a judge of the High Court and received much kindness at his hands. He retired, as soon as he attained the age of 60 years, though he was as hale and hearty then as he ever was in his life but his conscience would not allow him to stay in office one day beyond the allotted limit, for he considered himself bound by the existing rules to resign. That was the man all over.

It was my privilege to meet him now and then during the many years his life was spared after his retirement, in the course of many useful public functions all of which he made it a point to attend religiously. It was ever his motto to serve his fellow-men and he lived and died, in the enjoyment of his countrymen's love and affection, their high regard and deep esteem. Bengal is sanctified by the memory of such a son. A brilliant student, an erudite scholar, a devoted educationist, an able advocate, an upright Judge, he was all that—and more. But I remember him best—and if I may reverently say so—love him best as the mild and pious Hindoo, who, while endowed with the best western culture, rigidly adhered throughout his long life not merely to all the old Hindoo ideals but to all the Hindoo practices of religion. I cannot think of that frail little body without also recalling the facts that his mother's lightest wish was to him “law divine”—that rain or hail never prevented him from walking long distances every morning to wash himself in holy waters—that after a strenuous day in the heated atmosphere of Court a glass of Ganges water was all the refreshment he would allow himself.

Coming from me whose whole life appears, so far as the outside public is concerned, to be one long challenge to orthodoxy, this will perhaps be a surprise to many of my countrymen. They will ascribe it probably to my subliminal Hindoo consciousness—the ineradicable longing for the ascetic's end as a fitting crown to an active life. It may be so. I will not deny it. But I explain it to myself somewhat differently.

I am one of those who refuse to renounce my Hindooism, however little room there may be for me personally in the Hindoo social organism. It dawned upon my mind quite early in life that Hindooism was large enough and broad enough to retain within its fold those who believed in God and those who rejected Him—both those who believed in “One God and one alone” as well as those who worshipped the whole pantheon of 33 crores.

We do well to remember that for conduct in ordinary life which the law cannot reach, there must be the further rule of religion for the vast majority of us. Forms of religion vary from age to age and from country to country and no one of them can be absolutely free from error. The average man must bear in mind that although observances may seem offensive and stories told about the Gods may seem incredible, yet as a rule of action a system which has been the growth of ages is infinitely more precious than any theory which he could think out for himself. He will know that his own mind,—that the mind of any single individual—is unequal to so vast a matter,—that it is of such immeasurable consequence to him to have his conduct wisely directed, that, although the body of his religion be mortal like his own, he must not allow it to be rudely meddled with—“He may think as he likes about the legends of Zeus and Hero but he must keep his thoughts to himself; a man who brings into contempt the creed of his country is the deepest of criminals, he deserves death, and nothing else”

So said Plato—the wisest and gentlest of human law-givers, and so lived and died Gooroodass Banerjee, a man of precisely the same type as the great Greek philosopher

I for one cannot but feel the most respectful admiration for Gooroodass Banerjee's adherence to the age-old practices which inculcated reverence for our glorious past and forbade rude manipulation of hallowed forms. To me the most hopeful signs of the times are those which unmistakably point to a reconciliation between two opposing forces in our midst, inherited tendencies and acquired characteristics, as Lord Ronaldshay calls them

Gooroodass Banerjee, one of the earliest “Masters of Arts” of the Calcutta University, was one of the first to combine the scientific knowledge of the West with the profound learning and

spiritual culture of the East. As such I make my profound obeisance to his sacred memory.

SIR GOOROODASS

BEPINCHANDRA PAL

Sir Gooroodass Banerjee was one of those few men who influence contemporary life and character far more by their personal examples than by public activities or propaganda. This does not of course mean that Sir Gooroodass's public activities were inferior either in quality or in quantity to any of his contemporaries. By no means so. Indeed he was among the most active of our public men. No public movement that sought his help and guidance was refused his association or assistance. As long as he was on the High Court Bench, he could not appear on our political platforms. But all through his official career he was an enthusiastic worker in the cause of education, literature and of the general intellectual and social advancement of his people. Before his translation to the Bench, Sir Gooroodass had been closely associated with our national politics also. He was one of the prominent leaders in Bengal of the Indian National Congress in the earlier years of its life, and though he could not publicly participate in its activities afterwards, his interest in politics was not less keen than those of the most active of our politicians. But in politics as in everything else, Sir Gooroodass was an ideal moderate in the highest sense of the term. His moderation was not a cover either for self-advancement or for his inner violence of thoughts or ambitions. Sir Gooroodass's moderation was an element of his most intimate moral and spiritual life and culture. It was a quality of his essentially aristocratic intellect and character. It was bound up with the native sobriety of his mind and the quiet dignity of his conduct. In this, he was a representative of the old type of higher class Bengalee Hindu. All excesses, even the excesses of legitimate emotions or aspirations, disturb that equanimity of the soul which is so essential for the realisation of its identity with the universal which is the objective of all spiritual culture and goal of true religion among our people. A perfect balancing of

the mind, the emotions and the impulses, no less than a perfect control of the senses is absolutely necessary for the attainment of that salvation which comes through conscious realisation of the essential unity or identity of the individual with the Universal or Brahman. This is the sum total of the teachings of the *Upnishads*, the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad-Geeta* which are regarded as the three mutually supporting scriptures of Hindu Theosophy, in the wide sense of the term. And Sir Gooroodass's personal devotions were built upon this Vedantic Theosophy. Indeed all the Brahminical disciplines of modern Hinduism, more particularly in Bengal, among the worshippers of *Sakti*—and Sir Gooroodass belong to this class—were based upon this Vedantic Monism. He was a philosophical *Monist*. His worship of popular goddess like *Durga* or *Kali* or *Jagaddhatrī*, whose annual worship was an institution of his family life, was therefore not idolatry but only a symbolism of this Vedantic Monism. In and through these symbols, Gooroodass sought to realise the ultimate Reality manifested as Force.

He was a diligent student of Mathematics throughout his long life. Passing out of the Presidency College, Gooroodass was first employed, if we remember aright, as Professor of Mathematics in the Presidency College. It was later in life that he entered the profession of Law. But Mathematics was his first love and continued to be his last love also. His mathematical studies helped very materially to lend him his balanced judgment. It was these that impressed him also, we think, with the mystery of what we call Force, that shapes and controls the course of cosmic evolution. This Force is found at its final analysis to be nothing more or less than Energy. And what popular Hinduism worships as *Sakti* is only the manifestation of that Uncreated Energy which is responsible for this creation. This Uncreated Energy which, without being subject to transformations or changes produces the ceaseless transformations and changes of phenomena, is *Maha Maya*, translated as the Great Illusion in English. Yet to the Hindu thought it is not at all Illusion. In reality it is at once both True and Not-True, Un-real and Real. It is that great self-contradiction on the hypothesis of which the Hindu-mind sought to cancel the contradictions of thought involved in the whole world process, which

means production of perpetual changes from or in that which changes not and can never change. Gooroodass's mathematical studies helped him, thus to seize the fundamental truth of Vedantic Hinduism and reconcile not only his absolute Monism with the popular ceremonialism of the Bengalee Sakti cult, but also modern scientific thought with medieval Hindu religion. Here we must seek and find, in this spiritual philosophy and religious discipline, the master key to the mind and character of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee. Rarely have we come across a more balanced character, a greater equanimity of temper, a more anxious regard for the opinions and sentiments of others, a more genuine tolerance of the acutest difference of opinion and a deeper respect for freedom, except in saints and seers of the most advanced type, than what we found in Sir Gooroodass Banerjee. And it was these that made him so universally popular a public man and such a powerful influence for good among his contemporaries. People oftentimes mistook his scrupulous regard for other people's opinions and sentiments as a sign of weakness. The unique equanimity of his mind and character was much too frequently mistaken for lack of mental or moral strength by the more intrepid or bumptious of his contemporaries. But in truth, in his weakness, if weakness it could be called, lay the great secret of the supreme strength of Gooroodass Banerjee's character. In things essential unity, in things non-essential liberty, in all things charity,—this was the golden rule of Sir Gooroodass's life. And because of this ideal which he pursued with sleepless vigilance and unshaken loyalty throughout his life, Sir Gooroodass was a universal favourite and exerted such a silent, though none the less potent influence over the generation to which he belonged.

“Men of character are the conscience of the society in which they live,” wrote Smiles. The truth of this observation found one of its best illustrations in Sir Gooroodass Banerjee. To say that he was a distinguished scholar, a great lawyer, a conscientious judge, an erudite Vice-Chancellor, will be doing scant justice to the memory of Sir Gooroodass. He was all that and something more. He was a man above everything else. He held before his countrymen the ideals of a man. If “the end of a man's life is to know God,” Sir Gooroodass Banerjee was an ideal man.

If the highest duty of a man lies in the harmonious blending of *Jnan* (knowledge), *Karma* (righteous activities) and *Bhakti* (devotion), there are few men in this country who have excelled Sir Gooroodass and had a better title to be regarded as prince among men. He had a heart full of tenderness, yet hard as adamant. Modest and unassuming by nature he was uncompromising when his self-respect or the self-respect of his countrymen was at stake. The Minute of Dissent he wrote as a member of the University Commission proved his mettle.

Having lost his father in his childhood Gooroodass was brought up by his mother, a lady of great talents and kindness of heart. It is a fact that some of the greatest men in history, have attributed the eminence and greatness in after-life to the influence of their mothers. "What do you think is most needful for the better education of the French?" asked Napoleon Bonaparte of a talented French lady. "Mother" was her prompt reply. "Here we have a system in a word," admitted Napoleon. Sir Gooroodass understood it and did all that he could to promote women's education. He was a friend of the student community and save Sir Asutosh Mookerjee, none had a better title to their affection and gratitude. One of the founders of the Calcutta University Institute, there was hardly any meeting of the Institute which was not graced by him. Courteous and accessible, Sir Gooroodass's advice and help were often sought for by his countrymen, young and old, in hours of difficulty. He was a Hindu with a living faith in his religion, but most catholic in his dealings with men of all creeds and classes. Plain living and high thinking was the motto of his life. Mathematics was his favourite subject but he was not a "dry" mathematician. He found solace in literature and had a great liking for the Bengali literature, and was proud of its gradual evolution through the efforts of Vidyasagar, Bankimchandra, Hemchandra, Rabindranath. Presiding at a meeting of the Calcutta University Institute when Mr S. C. Mahalanobis spoke on the "Aristocracy among Flowers," Sir Gooroodass quoted fluently from Hemchandra's verses on flowers, to the delight of the audience. Speaking at a meeting of the Sylhet Union where prizes were being awarded to female students, Sir Gooroodass expressed his warm sympathy with women's education by observing "Sylhet was hitherto famous for its lime

and orange, but it has given us something sweeter than even oranges—educated ladies.” He wrote his treatise on *Jnan-o-Karma* in Bengali in order that his countrymen might be initiated into the mysteries of human life and its duties

No people deserve to have great men in their midst unless they learn to appreciate their worth

Bengal has produced great lawyers, scholars, and judges like Sir Gooroodass, but few can lay claim to a combination of ripe scholarship and high eminence with child-like simplicity, unassuming humility and the spirit of independence which formed the essence of his character. He was a nationalist in the true sense of the term, in dress, habits and modes of living.

IN MEMORIAM*

SIR WILLIAM EWART GREAVES

It is only in accordance with the fitness of things that the unveiling of the bust of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee should take place in connection with a meeting of the Senate of this University which he served so long and faithfully, of which he was such a distinguished ornament and whose Vice-Chancellor he was for three years, 1890-92

But I would desire to dwell for a few brief moments this afternoon not so much on his distinguished academic career, which is well known to you all who knew him longer and more intimately than I did, nor his distinguished career as a Judge of the High Court of Calcutta where his memory is recalled in the learned and lucid decisions, especially in matters of Hindu Law, which are recorded in the Law Reports of that Court and which I always read with the respect and attention which they demand as coming from one of his knowledge and attainments, but I would prefer to dwell on the man himself

All of us, I suppose, in the course of our lives, have met, from time to time, but I fear all too rarely, men and women who seem to stand out from their fellows as something apart from the ordinary

* Address delivered on the occasion of unveiling the bust of Sir Gooroodass in the Senate House, Calcutta University.

—they are persons, not necessarily of profound learning or attainments but who impress themselves on their fellowmen and on their surroundings by the saintliness of the character and by the manner of their life. We feel as we meet them that the world is better by their presence and richer by their example. They seem to exhalate from themselves a fragrance which comes like a refreshing breeze to a thirsty land. Consciously or unconsciously, we are better by their presence and uplifted by their example.

They are to be met with in every country and in every clime, they are not the especial products of any religion or of any civilization. As I stand here this afternoon my mind goes back to two such men whom I have known myself in my own country. One, an Oxford Tutor, whose name is not known to you, William Campion. The other, who is probably known to you, at any rate by name, Henry Scott Holland, for many years a Canon of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's in London and subsequently, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford. And Sir Gooroodass Banerjee seemed to me to be one of such men.

You cannot conceive of any action or thought of his as mean or petty, he was above and beyond such things—actuated only by the highest motives, exacting from himself and from others, the highest standards, and living always in the light of that religion which he cherished and loved so well. The world is better by their lives and poorer by their loss.

In the dust of controversy, in the strivings for place and power, in the searchings for material wealth, in the rush and hurry of these modern days, it is well that we should turn aside for a few brief moments this afternoon to contemplate the memory of one who soared above such things, who was in the world but not of the world, and who strove always for what was best and highest, never actuated by personal motives and by thoughts of self but by his life and by his example lifting others to the high plane on which he lived himself.

I recall as I stand here that spare, ascetic figure who was so familiar within these walls, a man of remarkable character of pious and devoted life, and I feel proud that it should fall to my lot to-day as Vice-Chancellor of this University to unveil the bust which has been erected to his memory by his admirers and his friends.

GOOROODASS THE MAN

PROF. JAYGOPAL BANERJEE

“ And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
That out of three sounds not a fourth sound, but a star.”

Browning's *Abt Vogler*, st. vii, lines 3-4

Gooroodass, as man, used God's gift to frame a star—the luminous Morning Star, pure white and as soft he “battled it like a man, not boylike sulked or whined” (Homer) “By fair deed of heart, or head, or intellect, he aspired to win the honest meed of just renown” (Petrarch) And, “his modesty, his piety, his calm serenity, his unbiassed justice won to him the affections of every good man.” (Landor's *Pentameron*)

The following pages will humbly attempt to present the man Gooroodass—of course, as he is understood by the writer, rightly or wrongly. The present writer discovered in him the union of contemplative with active life; and, believes today that the spiritual nature of our being which is the revelation of the *Upanishads*, of Plato to classical Hellas, and of Christ to the modern world, must have been the solace of all his earthly cares.

“ A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of right;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit, and live out
thy life as the light.”
(Swinburne)

“ The man
Who in this spirit communes with the forms
Of Nature; who with understanding heart
Doth know and love such objects as excite
No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No vengeance, and no hatred, needs must feel
The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love

In fellow-natures, and a kindred joy.
 Accordingly, he by degrees perceives
 His feelings of aversion softened down;
 A holy tenderness pervades his frame.
 His sanity of reason not impaired,
 Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
 From a clear fountain flowing, he looks around,
 And seeks for good, and finds the good he seeks;
 Until abhorrence and contempt are things
 He only knows by name; and if he hear
 From other mouths the language which they speak,
 He is compassionate, and has no thought,
 No feeling, which can overcome his love."

(Wordsworth)

"The man remains—the King over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man."

"Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
 Whose nature is its own divine control,
 Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea;
 Familiar acts are beautiful through love;
 Labour and pain, and grief, in life's green grove,
 Sport like tame beasts, none knew how gentle they
 could be!

The Abyss shouts from her depth laid bare,
 Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man unveils me;
 I have none "

(Shelley)

The great Rabindranath in his Kamala Lecture (University of Calcutta) for 1933, called *মানুষের ধর্ম* (the religion of man) has sufficiently stressed in his inimitable way this idea of a true man, namely, essentially a man *is what he is* (and not what he does). We cannot go on quoting indefinitely and therefore will give here only references—to pages (Preface page 1, para 2, middle) 2, 18 (last two lines but two), 22 (where he speaks of the self-controlled man), 25 (presenting the relation of the ideal to the real), *specifically* 27 to 31, and again, 39, 82, 93 and 103 (showing that the

inner man alone is the man *essentially*), 49, 55, 77-78 (where his emphasis is on *ଅନ୍ତର୍ଗତ ଇଦାନ ଶାନ୍ତି*—one's attaining the end of life by *being* the ideal), 60 (“*ତତ୍* କି” —what then?), 63 (dying unto life) and page 118 ratifying Browning's test (thy body at its best, how far can it project thy soul?).

Similarly, I would refer my readers also to Rabindranath's Hibbert Lecture for 1930 on *Religion of Man*—specially sections 3, 7, 10, and 14 (having a particular bearing on the life that Gooroodass chose as his own)

If space had permitted, by quotations from other works of Rabindranath the present writer's task would have been half accomplished—merely by suitable, relevant and appropriate quotations from the prose and verse of this world's greatest literary figure and India's greatest modern thinker-poet. We have, however, full confidence that the readers of these few pages will themselves remember many such passages of poetry (and prose) of Rabindranath which, we are rather afraid, might mislead them to conclude that this essay is nothing better than a clever compilation only—which, however, it is not at all. What tricks this writer's memory may have played with him he himself does not know—too familiar with Rabindranath's writings as he actually happens to be.

“ Not on the vulgar mass
 Called “work,” must sentence pass,
 Things done, that took the eye and had the price,
 O'er which, from level stand,
 The low world laid its hand,
 Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice .
 But all, the world's coarse thumb
 And finger failed to plumb,
 So passed in making up the main account,
 All instincts immature,
 All purposes unsure,
 That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount :
 Thoughts hardly to be packed
 Into a narrow act,
 Fancies that broke through language and escaped ,

All I could never be,
 All, men ignored in me,
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped ”
 (Browning)

A PREFATORY WORD

It is obvious that the method of investigation here employed in the pages that follow comes from Plato's method of enquiry adopted in his *Parmenides*.

The basic idea, therefore, is the study not of a mere mass of disjointed details industriously collected together from all available accounts of the late Gooroodass Bandyopadhyay—which accounts, as is invariably the case, must be made up of facts and fiction (*Dichtung und Wahrheit*) Legends are vital Legends have the knack of gathering round a man like moss round a tree trunk. Facts as facts are even sometimes eclipsed if the person concerned has specially *chelas* (admiring followers who must like the “ Nilus' serpent ” do their “ kind ”) These fiction-ridden facts, again, are fancifully connected together into a queer whole known as biography We read at last 500 pages (sometimes 5 volumes of 500 pages ¹) to find that a regulative principle, a ruling idea revealing an *organic* connection is conspicuous by its absence

Facts gain significance only when being first scientifically explored, and then psychologically analysed, they are intuitively grasped by means of a philosophical nexus discovered in the right way A process as exacting as, it is uncommon by that reason, this Moreover its appeal is only to the really cultured few “ Fit audience ” is bound to be few For the usual audience a popular method alone is reasonable That method gains in general sympathy by losing in scientific precision and in philosophical revelation of the underlying truth and its deep meaning which like a pearl has to be dived for

A personality is at least a disconcerting (if not baffling) *complex* entity The complexity increases with the cultural level reached by the man whose personality is the quest of the seeker of truth about a man

Gooroodasses are not the result of “ mass production ” Stars even of the third magnitude in a galaxy are few and far between.

Immense is the difficulty, therefore, of the person who seriously chooses to undertake the task of making an honest attempt to secure a reasonable measure of success in the enterprise either self-chosen, or, as in the present case, thrust upon him in spite of his known unworthiness. A confession of unworthiness is not always a pose.

To compare things great with small, was it a pose that made Socrates declare—at the end of prolonged and highly philosophical discussions with the elite of intellect of ancient Hellas—"what knowledge is, I do not know!" Was it nothing more than a reproduction of the Delphic Oracle? Was it what is styled the Socratic "irony"—and nothing more? If it was natural humility invariably born of sincere pursuit of truth—the Newtonian pebble—gathering on the sea-shore, the present-day school girl's common knowledge—which must impress one with the proverbial "Ars longa" depressing reality or if it was the Indian realisation that "विद्या ददाति विनयम्" (the gift of wisdom is meekness of spirit), should the virtue be counted as the monopoly of Socrates alone?

Our *Bṛihadaranyaka Upanishad* abounds in examples of it—that stand out so conspicuous specially in the *Yajnavalkya* and other *Rishi* disputations at the royal court of the Rajaishi Janaka and we of India will yield to none in our genuine admiration for the saving grace of true meekness of spirit.

Man's achievement, after all, is such a poor fraction of his divine aspiration for perfection—his passion for perfection which often makes many a sober man so sterile. A name associated with the world of education with loving reverence by many of us will at once occur to our readers in this sad context and the name of a person who left us only in December, 1938.

Is not man doomed to fulfil through "hours of gloom" tasks "in hours of insight willed?"

Intellectual fatigue may be the price demanded—may be the price paid. What then? If Plato (as Emerson believes) has made a havoc among men of genius, Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Kalidas, even Carpenter, Trine and many more—leave Rabindranath alone, who has not failed to "adorn" the whole world of thought, idea, emotion by his all-embracing "touch"—have made a more devastating havoc among us, poor, ordinary writers. Where is

any loop-hole left so late in the day as today for any man to escape from unconsciously reproducing the thoughts, ideas, views, opinions, imaginings, feelings of the endless procession of thinking, feeling men and women, who have managed to have been his predecessors? Originality is hunted for only by the ignorant, the thoughtless, the vain, and the self-sufficient. We are all mere inheritors. And inheriting is legitimate. It is also entirely different from what is glibly called plagiarism. Plagiarists there are—often, alas! are, too many. Many who are condemned as such are, *still*, innocent.

In these pages the writer has taken care to acknowledge all borrowings as conscientiously as possible and duty cannot demand more from him.

THE TASK BEFORE US

The character given to the present study signifies a self-imposed possibility of failure. The task, *viz*, of putting in black and white and that too for publication, the substance of what was placed before a select audience at the Senate Hall of the Calcutta University on the evening of Friday, the 28th of January, 1944, in connection with the Centenary Celebrations of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, was imposed *late* by the editor of the Memorial Volume. The speaker of the aforesaid evening never bargained for the task. It was sprung on him as a veritable surprise and he found himself inextricably caught in a net. The responsibility is *entirely* his for having gone rather a little out of the beaten track in having chosen to say his say on "Gooroodass the man." This "Gooroodass" and Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, so far as he knows, may be two different entities. Hence a world of difficulties and troubles too. Being in it we have to bear the brunt of the fight as heroically as we may.

Therefore we will begin with a very short discussion (at the very outset) of the problem of attempting a study and an interpretation of the "inward life" of a man whose "outward" life looms large in the vision of all who know him or even revere him on hearsay.

In true meekness of spirit, one claim, humble though it be, this writer can honestly make—he has had years to think this

subject-matter over before so unexpectedly being called upon to deal with it. So whatever is written here is written deliberately—not on the spur of the moment of impulse. That surely is not to claim for it any worth whatsoever.

THE INHERENT DIFFICULTY OF SUCH A TASK

We have opportunities—even when allowed the advantage of close intimacy, only of observing, watching, noting, analysing and thinking over a human personality's outward life. The inward life is to us a matter of conjecture and inference. There is no passport to the inner realm of a man's "being." His "becoming" is before our scrutinising gaze and the gaze may be hypercritical, it may be over—sympathetic, occasionally, it is too hostile or too idolatrous. We, oftener than not, miss the mark. Hence estimates of men more than of measures must be very cautious, dispassionate, meticulously just and as far as it may lie in a human judge, free from all prejudice or personal bias. Yet the verdict pronounced is bound to be coloured by the particular individual's way of judging. We cannot leap away from our own shadow—it always is with us. For this *inevitable* shortcoming, no apologies are relevant, or needed. Permit a man to discharge the responsible function of judging his brother man and you forfeit your right to complain, unless the judge fails to be true to his trust *consciously*. You have always the right to differ, to reject the verdict, to appeal to a higher tribunal. Are you, therefore, *quite safe*? Bear in mind—"Philip drunk, and Philip sober" or the reverse! "Would the gods the giftie give us" to judge aright in all cases and never to *err*! But they say "to err is human"

Yes! To be human! We had, for instance, of yore—

"Our Euripides, the human

With his droppings of warm tears,

And his touches of things common

Till they rose to touch the spheres"

Excellent, this. But how to emulate Euripides?

There is yet little reason for despondency even in solving this intricate problem of entering into the inner man who is to be appraised by a human being full of human infirmity. In Master Eckharts' *Sermons*, fortunately, we read—"In this world there

inwardness without an outward expression." We have before reason to believe that the real inward man—Gooroodass himself will reveal his essence to our searching efforts. Professor Herbert Murray in his Conway Memorial Lecture for 1915 rightly says that "in most systems it seems to be recognised that in the good Life there is both an element of outward striving and an element of inward peace."

This inward peace finds expression in the outward striving. Although this short study will focus itself on the inward peace of Gooroodass more than on his outward striving, one can easily find the activity of Gooroodass in different spheres of the life of Bengal for over half a century with a view to show what the essential character of this august personage was.

It is the essence of supreme poetry, that, and that alone, in minute happenings it reveals to us the presence of God, that its *sole aim* is to keep open "the great road that leads from the seen to the unseen" (Maeterlinck's *Treasure of the Humble*). The seen life of Gooroodass (as of all men and women) is the outward

It does lead us to the unseen, inward life which this essay proposes to dwell upon¹

The method of approach is the inductive method. If the hypothesis be correct, that Gooroodass not only studied life and knew it but *lived it* and lived so that his life might be *one integrated whole*, both as the embodiment and the expression in life's daily affairs of a *total self-hood*, his was the ideal of the fullest possible life, of course, under the special conditions imposed on him by the fact that he was an Indian, a Bengali, a Brahman possessing a rich heritage that came to him down innumerable centuries of civilisation and culture, but, what to the present writer is more pertinent and important, particularly of the Brahmanic type of self-culture with its wonderful adjustment of the three elements of work, devotion and wisdom of which the *Gita* gives the world a highly philosophical synthesis—not mere eclecticism, or even syncretism—as a safe guide to conduct. Arnold was satisfied with only *seeing* and truly and seeing it whole and steadily. India's programme

¹ Cf. "A soul that knows itself must know that the proper direction of its energy is not towards in a straight line, but round a centre which is within it" (The *Enneads* of Plotinus 98). In this connection *Enneads* IX 4 32 and 45 should be very carefully read.

of life-long *Sadhana* (severe course of self-culture and self-discipline), leaves enough room, however, for all *legitimate* self-satisfaction, not of a being bent on free and unrestricted self-indulgence. For, India knew—she may not do it now—that self-satisfaction must be regulated by the idea of self-fulfilment, *self-realisation* (witness the life of Paramhansadeva Sri Ramkrishna). India's sage-saints laid stress on realisation. Indian philosophy too is more than a *love* of wisdom. It is rather *wisdom lived* more than loved, though that love, genuine and deep, is ever present. We have to clearly and definitely have before us this specific Indian view of life, Indian ideal of life, if we propose to correctly interpret Gooroodass who was a genuine Indian—every inch of him. This cultured, religious-minded, Indian, this Gooroodass, therefore, *lived life whole* and that he did unflinchingly, come weal, come woe. This view gives us the true clue to the man, Gooroodass. Keeping this steadily before our eye as our guiding principle we shall easily steer clear of the danger of beating about the bush. A mass of details can be collected together regarding Gooroodass with reference to his *many-sided activities* very easily by any Dryasdust drudge. And a connected account inclusive of this mass may be conventionally labelled his biography. However, popular and welcome this procedure may be, the aim, the purpose, of this short study is different. There will be no harm whatsoever if, *as it is*, it is summarily rejected as a thing not wanted. Love's labour *is never* lost. For the writer, it is purely a labour of respectful and sincere love. Gooroodass had, let us at the very outset thoroughly recognise this truth, the will to live, according to India's age-long and realised ideal, one *harmonious* total life in which all the elements, intellectual, emotional, volitional, constituting the psychological man are harmoniously synthesized with the ethical and spiritual sides of man—*further*, and what is of greater significance, enriched by what, for brevity, we may name the marvellously rich heritage of the Indians of the 19th or the 20th century, curiously untrue to that noble and ennobling heritage. This is no characteristic sermon: but a bare statement of fact—dispute it never so much who may.

THE LIFE PROCESS OF MAN

If viewed not merely biologically, man's life process includes two struggles—(1) a struggle of man's instincts acting together,

that is, of the total organism and (2) something more internal, more inward, a sort of civil war waged by the instincts of the same individuality or, if you prefer, the same personality. The first is a strife with things *somewhat* outside, somewhat external; the second is necessarily more terrible, more dangerous. Milton realised this difference in his own life while distinguishing his literary and political controversies from his married life's fatal maladjustment. So did Shelley. Did not Shakespeare too? Did, certainly, Socrates, - Marcus Aurelius! From all that is *visible* to us, in the case of our revered hero the second strife was never trying even if it did seriously exist. We think it did not. Not that his voyage of family life was entirely a plain sailing to the destined haven of peace or bliss. We do not believe in that. Life is ethically and spiritually a stronger struggle for existence than it is biologically all earlier theories of evolution notwithstanding.

Moreover, has not Professor Ginsberg analysed what is essentially necessary in the concept of Evolution? And its result is to reduce it to a suitable and serviceable "descriptive" conception and nothing more. William James seems to be right when he speaks of philosophies as "just so many visions, *modes of feeling* the whole push and seeing the whole drift of life." (*Italics mine*).

OUR DEFINITE AIM

A very humble attempt will be made in this short study to see the *whole drift* of a really representative man's life in the Bengal of the century outgone. If Dr. Joly's concise formula may serve, "life being a rhythmic formula," we may succeed in probing deep down to something like a principle of a fundamental character lying at the bottom of this rhythm as symbolised by the outward manifestations of it in the manifold and varied activities of Gooroodass as practically known to most of us.

Let us, at least, try and see

TO BE VERSUS TO DO

Two fundamental values of the Man-Idea relate to (1) what a man is intrinsically and essentially by virtue of his general attributes and qualifications, his ideas and ideals, his conduct and what is called character, by his reactions to the totality of

his environment, by his thoughts and feelings determining his relations with other human beings, and (2) what a man in his active life *does*, what his usual conative tendency is and what is the net authentic record of his efforts and his achievements in different spheres of action.

We have decided to fix our choice, on the first value. Ours therefore will be an attempt honestly made to appraise *the man* that Gooroodass was and even is today to the present generation.

A further narrowing down of our scope may be made for the sake of brevity.

We will particularly confine ourselves to study in a scientific spirit *how* and to what extent this personality waged an incessant war all his life against the clamorous cravings of the flesh¹ with a view to *realise* (in the traditional Indian fashion) the Hindu Ideal of life imposed by the scriptures on a Brahman and to genuinely and sincerely live up to it

Our position is well defined and clear-cut. By way of an opponent's (of the traditional गुरुप्रश्न) critical objection we will put in here a query "Is not the enquiry as to what a man is one necessarily involving and including the previous question of what actually he has done or attempted in life to do?" This pragmatic test we do not mean to evade altogether "To rust unburnished, not to shine in use, as though to breathe were life"—this surely is self-condemned "To smite the sounding furrows" is heroic, more heroic is "to strive and not to yield, being strong" in will to do. Deed as deed has its immense value. But only if deeds are the results of a high ideal of life which lends significance to *doing*. Doing is an integral part of high thinking, of an incessant endeavour to reach the heights considered inaccessible by the common people who are pleased to grovel on earth. Unless this doing has behind it a noble purpose, lit up by a high ideal, it is futile, sometimes even worse. We remember how in his later life, if Plato's soaring idealism (as enunciated in *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus* and even *Republic*) had to be considerably modified by the philosophers' actual experience, then the change resulted in a concession made by him in his *Politics* and *Laws* to the needs of a life of

¹ "We can know a thing spiritually only by becoming it. We must be the thing itself" (*Spurgeon*)

activity among brother men His high thinking did actually bow its head to good doing, through which man better expresses his real self and renders his life *fruitful* Fruition is his end and indeed more than in anything else is to be found that fruition His will is as much a divine gift as his great powers of thought and reflection, or his aspiring imagination But next to feeling, which is in the widest commonally spread among all mankind down to the savage, *doing* is far too common and often commonplace We all *do* something—but to what end?—perhaps the many only lay waste their energy thus Life never becomes rich in content that way Kalidas knew better and his *Kumarasambhavam* made *Parvatī* betake to *samadhi* (Canto V) and be changed into Gaurī, *Parvatī* became strictly *निवर्गद्धा* (verse 13) and did attract the *Rishis* who became anxious to see her in her new condition We note that “*ভগ্নো নহং যা চরিত্ত্বং প্রচক্ষণ*” The Brahmacharin who met her then (verse 66) warned her off unworthy pursuits (*অবস্থানির্বন্ধ*).

The doer of deeds has to very carefully think of the proper regulation, control, culture of that will to do without which the highest life of self-reflection, of complete allegiance to wisdom may be barren, jejune and for all practical purposes useless to the individual as much as to society. Our emphasis, therefore, in this essay, will be laid on the Hindu ideal held in high regard and esteem by Indian tradition to which Gooroodass dedicated himself

Only we will beg leave to add here that “Not simply to know (or think), to feel, to do, but pre-eminentlly *to be*” has always been the very essence of the teachings of the *Vedānta*, as of the guidance afforded by the *Yoga* philosophy, or, by such Christian Mysticism as that of the *Docta Ignorantia*, of the *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, and, of the *practical sadhana* of the Indian saints (specially mediaeval) of the north and the south of the Vindhya

A WARNING

“To be,” therefore, must not be identified, with “to do”—however close may the nexus be between the two Certainly we do not propose to put these two in two separate water-tight compartments But their distinction is not fanciful. Even Nietzsche, who stands as the poles asunder in relation to Gooroodass, holds that “God is the culminating moment · life is an eternal

process of deifying and undeifying ” and his conception of God is such as “ will help man to live the full life ” (*vide* “ Thus Spake Zarathustra ” and “ Human All too Human ”). This “ fuller ” life-idea pervades Goethe’s works and on it is based Nietzsche’s idea of a Superman and his “ great ” (as opposed to “ small ”) *reason* is “ a massive ‘wisdom of the totality of human instincts (for he sticks to the ‘Unconscious’).” Nietzsche comes in because of his great similarity with intuitionists and mystics, despite his “ will to power ” and proneness to “ pessimism ” and his “ anti-intellectualism ”. The absolute self-surrender embraced joyfully by Gooroodass through the influence of the *Gita* on his whole life is diametrically opposed to the Nietzschean fatalism which is quite a strange phenomenon when viewed in the light of his realisation that without freedom of the will life and conduct cease to have any ethical value and even any philosophical significance. His superman does fashion life, does shape himself, and is the architect of his own destiny. We detect in these two personalities—Nietzsche and Gooroodass who stand *so far* apart as to demonstrate a thorough contrast only—deep down below the visible surface a curious point of contact simulating resemblance and that is *the will*. Nietzsche’s is the will to power; Gooroodass’s is the will to live the *Gita-cum-Manu samhita* ideal life of a Hindu householder (गृह्य par excellence) in its fulness. The Fichtean Will supreme, like that of the Tantrika philosophy of India, directly or indirectly exerted its influence on both these personalities. Nietzsche’s challenge to Life is insistent and persistent—and he would have either Yea or Nay (cf “ Sartor Resartus ” of Carlyle). His verdict was for “ Yea ” (*vide The Twilight of the Idols*). What matters most is the fulness of life and our contention is that such was also the ideal of Gooroodass, only, life to him had a thoroughly Indian meaning as we shall presently see. Our *Vainashrama* sociological scheme runs perilously close to the Nietzschean “ natural order of ranks among men ” and on top is his Superman and our Brāhman. This question is tempting for a comparative study which, of course, is neither here nor there. The *Gita* which was our hero’s sole guide in life is *in a way* anti-sannyasa in its ideal scheme of life values, though Samkara’s *Gita-bhashya* desperately saves the *Gita* from this its tendency. Very briefly put, Nietzsche’s ethics too condemns

austerities, self-immolation, excess of detachment and “non-passion” in his famous maxim of “*Not Memento mori but Memento vivere*!” His heartening counsel to brother men is—“Remain ever true to the earth, beloved brethren, with all the might of your virtue!” There is a grandeur in this exhortation to which our prejudice against Nietzsche must not make us blind. Personally, we are sworn enemies to all prejudice. The mind of a rational and cultured man must ever remain freely and fully open to light whencesoever it may come. For, verily, *Light is Life*. Etymologically, Ahura means “Lord of Life” (in the Zendavesta) and represents the “Father-aspect of God.” “Haurvatai” is “Fulness or Perfection” and “also implies spiritual growth and attainment of Perfection” and “achievement of Perfection means Immortality” (Dr. I. G. S. Taraporewala, B.A., Ph.D., B.A.L.L., in his *Gāthā Ahunavairi*, Bombay, 1944). The Doctor adds in his Foreword rightly that “the nearest to the Gāthās, both in language, and in spirit, is the Vedic Literature of India” (page ix). With Vivekananda says this much-misunderstood German, that whatever helps to render human life fuller, richer, more complete, less anæmic, more vitalised and humanised must be judged good for men. Bad for man is whatever impoverishes his life. In a superman the contents of life are not only immensely rich, varied and highly-developed but also equally *organised into one harmonious whole*. That is, our *Gita* ideal of a synthesis (সমন্বয়) of wisdom, work and devotion (জ্ঞানকর্মভক্তি)—only India’s differentiation lies in the sublimely superb conception of all the three being forms of *Yoga*—কর্ম must be কর্মযোগ, ভক্তি must be ভক্তিযোগ and, জ্ঞান must be জ্ঞানযোগ. We shall have presently to concentrate our attention on this salient point in our study of Gooroodass the man and our readers by now should realise how Nietzsche had to come in—not surely as a trespasser. We have not been inadvertently digressing away from our central theme at all. Only our canvas aims at a fuller perspective and must therefore be broad enough. Goethe in the West answers to the superman ideal and Gooroodass in recent days, and on a smaller scale, managed to answer to the *Gita* ideal of a complete man, a man self-fulfilled, a man self-realised. That, without anticipating things, may be pointed out here as our goal in this short study.

Pray, bear in mind that the “will-to-power” is nothing but our *Shākta* philosophy and *Shakta-sādhana* ideal, and Vaisnavism which has a whole world of the purest and sweetest things of life in its favour has tended to make the race of Bangalis emasculated today. This is an extremely inconvenient piece of truth and will make many of us uncomfortable and possibly too ready to curse the present writer wholeheartedly for his temerity. The writer cannot, however, be deprived of the privilege of being in the company of the famous author of *Vande Matarām*. Our starting point (see page 265 *ante*) is the “Man-Idea” of two fundamental values.

Values, modern philosophy asserts, are constituted for each man by the individual’s outlook on life ;—that is, his main concerns, his chief interests, the ultimate *end* to which all his *actions* incessantly move. Thus a man’s conative activity is subsumed even in what he *is*. These ends are sources of pleasure and pain, of happiness and misery. Usually man lives for himself first and for propagation next—for “selfhood” and “breed” in Dr Bridges’ language (*vide Testament of Beauty*). Man’s efforts are directed either to (positively) attain satisfactions which are generally called achievements and successes, or to (negatively) avoid frustrations of satisfactions which lead to despair, disenchantment, disillusionment, nay, even to pessimism and cynicism.

Positive satisfaction, attainment, to be thorough and systematic involves pre-eminently thought, reflection, forethought, far-sightedness, gathering of guiding experiences, *making of ideas*, analysis of self and of not-self, and, finally a scientific co-ordination of experiences. Because values are rather disjointed, scattered instead of being *naturally* related to one another. The simple well-known truth is that the keener the zest in life or its race continuity the greater must be man’s *emotional* urge to know what reality is in essence and *vice versa*, so that he may not discover at long last that he had all along been led by an *ignis fatuus*.

VALUE AND THOUGHT

So, values of “objects” to the “subject” do depend, quite apart from the inherent quality of the “objects” themselves, largely upon the “subject’s” *thinking process*. Therefore, values are in a way different for each individual man. This further

involves each man's personal capacity to contribute more or less to the thing of his vital interest That is, popularly, each man's "own concern"

American philosophy has today the tendency to hold that "*value* varies with *idea-resource*" or, to put the matter roughly, "to be more alive is both to see more and to feel more" The hypothesis has been framed that "all valuing (and so all feeling) is a way of knowing 'objects' with one's *whole-idea*."

Take an instance

Man's religion, that is, man's loyalty to what is the highest, noblest, purest, *within* him, the lurking perfection which he wants to realise ('real'-ise) and even adore as divinity, presupposes man's instinctive profound feeling of the highest value.

Thus, man looks up to the highest conceivable, ultimate value, *the value of values*.

TENDENCY OF HUMAN NATURE

In Wundt's language—feelings equally as ideas become religious the moment these "refer to an *ideal* existence"

Whatever is intimately associated with religion is sacred to man because it is a supreme value, transcending in import, significance, importance, even usefulness, *all other* values which *comparatively* are regarded as things too commonplace

THE MORAL ORDER

Again, to J B Pratt, religion is "the serious and social attitude towards the Determiner of Destiny" Such an attitude creates in man a strong yearning to establish friendly and close relations, loving relations, with the Power Unseen yet fervently *felt*, and believed to "make for righteousness," symbolizing the perfection of an invisible Spiritual Order In the *Rig-Veda* we come across Varuna as the deity of ঋত্ব (which includes ऋतम्) *Ritam* is primarily moral order But eventually it is more comprehensive and stands for the Order Spiritual The *Derasuna* fierce war is waged to maintain this order So in the Avesta the Ormuzd-Ahriman conflict serves the same purpose. In Christianity there is the God-Satan conflict which Mohammedanism

has taken over. Buddhism's emphasis is on ethics and on the maintenance of the Moral Order. Even so-called Atheists and Agnostics are extraordinarily faithful to that order.

Now, this attitude is, in the last analysis—we are short of space and must be concise—one of Faith and Love (श्रद्धाप्रण), *never* dissociated from Knowledge of Truth (ज्ञान्) or from the Will to do (कर्म्) what is understood as morally right, as the good, as the *ought*, and as such holy, worthy of reverence, awe-inspiring. In awe fear is sublimated by a sense of something “Sublime.”

THE PLACE OF THE IDEAL

Man, weak, infirm, imperfect, humble, meek, can at least partially know this Eternal Value. Nay, he can, he does, live up to it. Mind viewed as value becomes spirit “To be spiritual is to live in the presence of the ideal” (*Santayana*) Yea, the Ideal must never for a single moment be lost sight of, come what may.

In Plato's Idealism “sensibles” *participate* in the Ideas and the more they approximate by this “participation” the Archetype, the more real they become We must severely restrain ourselves to keep within our narrow tether and so bid good-bye to Plato and come abruptly back to our relevant point, *most narrowly interpreted*

THE HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS

Again, it is a habitual disposition of the will, of the heart—even of the intellect—to deeply care for the highest value, disregarding, so to say, all surface aspects of existence It is man's instinctive and inborn ready response of the soul to this highest which (apart from “forms” and “institutions” outwardly embodying his religion) constitutes the “subjective” state called *spiritual living*—in a state of complete equipoise of the balanced whole consisting of thinking, feeling and acting organically united into an integrated whole, an indivisible *one* This is the end and aim of our *Yoga-sadhana* which is more a *way of life* than a philosophical speculation This ineffable, unique repose of the soul is specifically experienced by a true mystic (witness our *Upanishads*, Neo-Platonic Philosophy of Alexandria, and the richer experienced

অখণ্ডানন্দ of India's numerous saints, *Saiva*, *Sākta*, *Varsnaava*, *Gānapatya* and the like).

MAN'S FINAL AIM

In a word, the final aim is one of Harmony and in Religion alone is displayed by man unmistakably his capacity of an "uncompromising loyalty to the Highest."

Philosopher or no philosopher, man must philosophize. We *will* restrict ourselves, we solemnly promise to an irreducible minimum of it in this Gooroodass the Man study. Yet philosophy cannot be ruled out, shut out. We have, therefore, just done a bit of philosophizing, the better to understand Gooroodass the man and the better to be able to present to our readers the result of our study of the man. Be it not thought at all that needlessly a slice of philosophical discourse has shrewdly been smuggled into this short study of a big subject

Evident it is by now that this writer's attitude to life makes too much of religion and next to it of morality. There are quarters where both are an anathema.

THE ENVIRONMENT OF GOOROODASS .

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It has to be noted in this connection that Gooroodass came on the scene when the scene had shifted a good deal. His predecessors of the era of Bentham, Mill, Comte had riddled to tatters with ultra-rationalistic high criticism the *traditional* Hindu religion revived in a re-interpreted shape by the great Raja Rammohun Ray whom it is the fashion to call the father of Indian Renaissance whatever the expression may mean. Then followed two revivals—the Brahmo type of Hinduism refashioned out of recognition and identity and the Neo-Hinduism *later on* sponsored by Sasadhai Tarkachuramani and Srikrishnaprasanna Sen. Into that history we must not seriously enter. Yet that back-ground should not be omitted in any serious effort to place Gooroodass the man *of Bengal* in a proper and adequate historical perspective. We believe in that perspective which is a better key to the inner secrets of such a life than idolatrous hero-worship or even genuine love and regard for Gooroodass. Such love, such

regard we all have—may be more or less (or in Plato's language "Great and Small"). If mine were a biographical study of Gooroodass instead of being what I have chosen on purpose (and not by error) that it should be, I would have *stressed* adequately this side or aspect of the whole matter. That esteemable kind of work, however, I have elected to leave to worthier hands. I work in my limited field where I am at home. Readers have their choice and liberty to give me a very wide berth as an intolerable crank. The editorial board (if there be any) can, of course, reject straight-away such a study of then Sir Gooroodass Banerjee. But my liberty, I humbly add, should not be proposed to be interfered with or curtailed by lovers of liberty—the liberty of thought with its corollary of the liberty of expression which go together. Milton's *Areopagitica* has long before settled that question, though it has been re-handled by Mill.

OUR VIEW-POINT

I cannot think of Gooroodass *minus* his traditional Hindu religion and that, again, as of an orthodox (in the best sense of the word) Brāhman. And I know I am not wrong, from my rather intimate contact with him. There can be no harm in mentioning in this connection the fact that he (my revered senior) graciously vouchsafed to me ample opportunities of serious talks for hours on subjects that did matter to both the parties. This opinion regarding the man Gooroodass has not been hastily formed and possibly it is liable to less error than other opinions, if any, not consistent with it.

After all, it is a question of "angle of vision." But that is material. Its character determines whether a study will lead to truth or the reverse. I have paused and pondered over it pretty long. But each individual's view-point has to be his own—something *sui generis*. That is not all. I will quote the famous Oxford Greek scholar, Professor Gilbert Murray—from his Lecture on *The Store Philosophy* (1915) where it discusses Zeno's view of "What is good?" and the portion reads as follows:—

"Nothing but goodness is good. It is what you are that matters—what you yourself are; and all these things (rank, riches, distinction, health, pleasure, barriers of race or nation) are not you.

They are external, *they depend not on you alone*, but on other people. The thing that really matters depends on you, and on none but you. * * * A wicked man or an accident may cause you pain, break your leg, make you ill, but no earthly power can make you good or bad except yourself, and to be good or bad is the only thing that matters" (*Italics mine*)

"At this point," says the Professor, "common sense rebels"; and Zeno's answer, as given by him, is satisfactory.

"Goodness is performing your function well" and it is "*Phusis*" (mistranslated Nature but really signifying "process of growth" called by us "Evolution") that "shapes each thing towards the fulfilment of its own function—that is, towards the good." This "*Phusis*" is like what Bergson calls "La Vie or L'Élan Vital at the back of L'Évolution Créatrice" We cannot further pursue this exposition of the topic. But the quotation, so relevant, will, I trust, suffice

And though we must not go far afield, a parallel to the Greek *Phusis* may here be indicated as we have the same conception in the *ভর্গঃ* of the *Gayatri Mantra* (*Rig-Veda*) and in the *Yajurvedic* *তেজঃ* plus *ওজঃ* in the famous prayer "তেজো'সি তেজো মযি ধেহি" etc Greek thought has a close kinship with the Vedic thought, which, again, with the Zedavestan of Ancient Iran. Compare, for instance, the following *Gāthās*.

- "O Māzdā, through thy Fire, blazing clear,
Unto each man his place do Ye assign."
- "Thine Inner Fire, Ahūrā, to behold
We yearn,—He blazes mightily through Truth."
- "Grant to Zar'oustra joy of Inner life."
- "Righteousness is the best of all that's good,
'Tis the fulfilment of our task on earth."

(Quoted from Dr. I J S Taraporewala's English Translation of *Gāthā Ahunavartī*, Bombay, 1944)

This Greek parallelism is of the utmost value to my interpretation of Gooroodass the man and for it my debt to Professor Murray is great.

There are two courses open to the man of God who follows obediently *Phusis* interpreted as by Zeno to mean God's eternal Law operating in the Cosmos but specially in man to which religion much later gave the name of Providence "We are led up," says

Murray, "to the great doctrine of the later Stoics, 'Symaply of the Whole'." "Man's soul, being actually a portion of the divine fire (*Phusis*), has the same freedom that God himself has."

TWO FUNDAMENTAL TYPES OF MAN WHO ASPIRE AFTER THE TRUE, THE REAL, THE GOOD

This gives us two types of Stoics, corresponding to two well-marked types of Indian *sadhakas*, viz., those who defy the world as ভাগী, স্বাধীন, (e.g., Buddha, Samkara) and those who work with the world (which Arjuna is advised in the *Gita* to do) Arjuna must not be the scorner of the earth but true to the kindred points of heaven and home *Gita* had the aim of fighting স্বাধীনতা which looking upon the empirical world as an illusion enjoined complete detachment (ভাগ), renunciation, the life ascetic, the life of the Eremite. It upheld rather the *Varnasrama Dharma* as স্বাধীন in which even destruction is preferable in contrast with the more dangerous, terrible, fatal স্বাধীন In passing, we will draw the attention of all readers to the fact that, according to our interpretation of Gooroodass, he modelled his life on the *Gita* pattern—his স্বাধীন being the *Dharma* of a Brāhman householder (গৃহস্থ) as described, say, in *Manusamhita* Of this more anon We will again quote here Professor Murray Says he further on—"In the magnificent phrase which Pliny translates from a Greek Stoic, God is that, and nothing but that; man's true God is the helping of man; *Deus est mortali invare mortalem.*" In the Avesta this Strength to Serve is called "Xš'athra."

Is not this our Vivekananda's well-known and oft-quoted—"The only God that exists, the only God in whom I believe my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races?"

Further, it is said of Vivekananda that "he surrounded service (of man) with a divine aureole and raised it to the dignity of a religion" But we must not, unless we propose to misread him, forget that he equally adored the ascetic's life of contemplation, of *samādhi* Hence the double idea in the Ramakrishna Order of a *Matha* and a Mission No one in modern India practised *samādhi* so intensely as Vivekananda; to his Master it came spontaneously as part of his nature, as part of his life This study will establish that Gooroodass was an ideal householder

(गृही and of course not a *sannyasi*). We know also that he was ever a friend of the poor, the needy. His was no pity for the poor—he felt *with* them and not *for* them. In pity there is a subtle sense of superiority. The man pitying is conscious that he is above the vicissitude of life to which the object of his pity is subject. Not such was the feeling of sympathy *with* human misery, human suffering, of Christ, of Buddha (*compassion* incarnate), of Chaitanya whose all embracing love spontaneously extended to one and all, and, on a lower plane, of Vivekananda, of Burns the poet, of Gooroodass the man. This is the Stoic “Sympathy of the Whole” feeling with the part. It is really and essentially the love with which God loves his infirm creature, man. Sympathy is Love, in another form, that is all. Yet Gooroodass’s was decidedly, after Vivekananda, a life consecrated to the contemplation of the One, of the Real, of Paramatman—combined with, in union with, service of man wherever service was needed and *deserved*. The two fundamental types—the contemplative and the active benevolently—are not necessarily antithetical. Many great *sadhakas* of the world (Eastern and Western) combined the two together into one whole in their own personality and the combination whenever and wherever it is accomplished is a supremely happy one. Why should the life contemplative shut out the life active? Cannot a good man be in the world without being of the world? But by mere strength of service dissociated from the contemplation of the Real one at least can be a philanthropist and however very useful he may be in the matter of relieving distress of others he fails to be true to *Phusis*, he fails to completely “perform his function” as Zeno demands. In other words, one fails to be good as “the Good” has been understood and interpreted by all *seers of the truth* (by *Rishis*), by all sages of the world, by all great prophets and equally great poets—that is, by all truly *inspired* persons. That is the Wordsworthian idea of being true to the kindred points of heaven and home. Allegiance to the One and allegiance also to the many as Plato’s *Philebus* strongly insists upon in the case of the good life.

THE ONLY CORRECT APPROACH TO GOOROODASS THE MAN

By the expression “Gooroodass the Man” chosen as the subject of this study is particularly meant that Gooroodass can

truly be understood and interpreted only in one way, *viz.*, by placing his total personality in the indispensably necessary perspective of the essence of Indian culture (a word, unfortunately, often misused).

We have therefore at this stage to turn our attention to that background. That means the background must be concisely re-created as it were for our study from available materials. We address ourselves to that task.

THE RIGHT BACKGROUND

Severely shutting out a mass of details, the salient features of that Indian heritage which are very relevant to our study may thus be presented —

(a) The goal: always *spiritual*, *i.e.*, the Indo-Aryan spirit and the efflorescence of the Indian genius comprising (1) ব্রহ্মদর্শন (intuition of the Absolute) and (2) ব্রহ্মনিষ্ঠা মোক্ষসাধন (the attainment of release from bondage, of liberation of the *embodied* soul by one-pointed consecration, self-dedication to that Reality, called Brahman or Paramatman). This includes the philosophical “*Brahman Idea*” as সচিচিদানন্দং সত্যং শিবং সুন্দরং, জ্ঞানমনস্তং, শান্তং শিবমহৈত্যা with its well-known formula of তত্ত্বজ্ঞান, and of তপোব্রহ্ম (Truth—Existence—Consciousness—Bliss which again is Truth—Goodness—Beauty, that is, Wisdom Infinite—Repose of the Soul—Well-being as the One that for ever was, is and will be, as the Abiding Changeless Substratum of all changing phenomena known as the empirical world).

“The Brahman Idea” suggests Unity in diversity or multiplicity: Cosmic Unity manifest in the empiric many: *One in many*.

(b) The main injunction (বিধি—“thou shalt”) is philosophico-ethical.

ঋতম্ সত্যম্ বদিষ্যামি কবিষ্যামি চ ।

“ব্রহ্মনিষ্ঠো গৃহস্থঃ স্যাৎ তত্ত্বজ্ঞানপরাধনঃ ।

যদ্যৎ কৰ্ম প্রকুবীত তত্ত্বমগ্নি সমর্পয়েৎ ॥”

(In words and deeds I must always religiously stick to truth and righteousness. The householder dedicated to Brahman must be inclined to the highest knowledge of true reality and whatever he may do must be done in the spirit of all being laid at the holy feet of that Brahman—without any desire for personal gain or satisfaction as the fruit of conative activities.)

The implications, put together for convenience, are—God—God-consciousness, the sole guiding principle of living only in God (as manifested Brahman), complete surrender to the Divine Will by making activities desire-free, the ethical ideal of duty done for duty's sake only, careless of consequences, and perfect self-adjustment to due social demands as a social being, as a member of society.

(c) Wisdom, knowledge must yield humility, meekness. “বিদ্যা দদাতি বিনয়ং”, তৃণাদপি স্তনীচেন কীর্ত্তনীযঃ সদা হবিঃ ।”

(d) Unshakable Belief that Righteousness alone prevaleth. যতো ধৰ্ম্মস্ততো জয়ঃ (cf. the *Mahabharata* ideal).

SALIENT FEATURES OR ELEMENTS

Its implications, again, are maintenance at all costs of holiness, purity, self-control, chastity, due reserve and restraint, propriety, decorum, decency all through life.

(e) Attainment of perfect equipoise of the soul, under the most trying circumstances The *Gita* ideal of স্থিতবীঃ achieved by making life's single aim one thing, viz, perpetual, incessant *Divine-Awareness* (cf. the *Enneads* of Plotinus).

(f) High thinking but plain living—the ideal “Brāhman-Pandit” (not the faked Brummagen variety of today) Bengal is wonderfully rich in current anecdotes of erudite scholars entirely devoted to, dedicated and consecrated to, the pursuit of truth, to wisdom, to জ্ঞান righty understood which is not the popular “knowledge.”

(g) Renunciation and Detachment বৈরাগ্য, বীতবাগ্ধ, নিকাশম্ । “ত্যাগেনৈকেনামৃতত্বমানন্ডঃ” (Witness the ideal renunciation of Rāmchandra of Vishva, of Gautama Buddha, of Samkara—to name only a few)

For, true self-fulfilment is through genuine self-effacement. Do we not *die unto life*? What else is Immortality?

(h) Downright Sincerity Poor Carlyle cried himself hoarse over it ‘আৰ্জবম্’ । Sincerity involves strict adherence to truth pure and simple, the *whole* truth (half truths being worse than lies) and nothing but the truth.

In *Manusamhita* IV 138 we have :—

“সত্যং ব্রহ্মাণ্ডে প্রিয়ং ব্রহ্মানু ব্রহ্মাণ্ডে সত্যমপ্রিয়ম্ ।

প্রিয়ং চ নানৃতং ব্রহ্মাদেব ধৰ্ম্মঃ সনাতনঃ ॥”

(the last injunction is so conveniently forgotten by time-servers and sycophants).

(২) Stern, Disciplined, Regulated *Daily* Life নিত্যকর্ম্মাণি তথা নিত্যসাধনানি বিহিতানি” This is the crux of the entire programme.

(৩) Devotion. “শ্রদ্ধাভক্তিপ্রেমজনপ্রসূতানি”।

Daily worship must mean daily dying unto the Life Eternal, unto Immortality. For that is *self-realisation*, for অনৃত্য্য পুত্রাঃ (the offspring of the Immortal One). ভক্ত্যা আত্মনিবেদনন্, ভগবচ্চিন্তনন্ তদ্ব্যনন্, তচ্ছবণন্, এতদুপায়েন সানোব্যন্, সানীপ্যন্ সাবুধ্যন্ (with the Divine) (By self-surrender, meditation and constant thought of God, dependence on Him, attainment of various types and degrees of union with God).

TO SUM UP :

This superbly sublime ideal of life prescribed for a genuine householder—who has not passed on to *Vanaprastha* (forest recluse life) or *Sannyasa* (mendicant's life stage)—is surely very hard to realise but never considered by India to be an impracticable idea, to be a visionary dream, to be inaccessible though extraordinarily high. Instances are cited of those who had achieved it—and all the instances are not mythical. To-day many are sceptical. Today many are decadent The world is far too much with us—getting and spending we lay waste our powers The Indian tradition stands four-square against all scepticism, against even adverse criticism. One may not be true to that hoary tradition—but not to know it argues one to be a thorough degenerate

Gooroodass all his life strenuously attempted to live up to this ideal and he did succeed to a highly appreciable degree That is beyond dispute And he lived in our midst! He was in the world He discharged quietly yet resolutely all his duties (of course as he understood them) He never flinched He little cared for what others might say Mrs Grundy had little influence on him He saw clearly—*seeing*¹ correctly must ever precede

¹ Blake has with a poet's gift of words, beautifully defined, so to say, this 'seeing' in the stanza so familiar—

“ To see a world in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour ”

and you miss this 'seeing' when

“ A yellow primrose on the rivers brim a yellow primrose to you and nothing more ”

“ doing ” aright—his goal and proceeded straight to it unwaveringly. Like the needle of a mariner’s compass his mind always indicated the true north and in his life’s voyage in shine and shower he steered on to the harbour safe and sound—not surely unbuffeted by the world’s winds and waves sometimes raging furious for the navigator.

We begin with a mere list of prescribed injunctions of the Indian *Manavadharmaśāstras* :—

Daily life regulated by (1) morning duties of purifying the body ending in ablutions (2) puja consisting of *sandhyā*, *āhnikā* (3) meditation (*upāsana*), (4) almsgiving (*vikshādāna*), hospitality (*ātithya*), that is, obligations personal and social

Regarding Meditation one may consult *Brahmasūtram* III, 4 25, 27 and 50 ; IV, 1. 1-2 and 7-12 ; IV. 2.16 ; IV 3 6 *et seq.* Also *Chandogya Upaniṣad* II and III.

The Brāhmanic ritualistic injunctions are mainly—(1) teaching worthy pupils, (2) the *homa* sacrifice, (3) *pitriyajna* (fulfilling the debt to the manes) (4) *vali* (sacrifice) and (5) hospitality and charity

The main taboos (निषेध) are—(1) insincerity, (2) anger, (3) jealousy, (4) cruelty, (5) deceit, (6) greed, (7) violence in thought and deed, (8) laziness, physical and mental, (9) injury to others, (10) untruthful conduct, (11) service for gaining a livelihood (called *वृद्धि*), (12) saving out of honestly-earned money beyond the minimum necessary for the passing day (*cf.* “ never think of the morrow ”).

Non-injury, candour, straightforwardness, modesty, gentleness, solacing utterances, simplicity, sincerity, purity of body and mind, perfect control of sex urge, self-restraint, self-possession, tranquillity and a desire-free mental peace, maintenance of dependants are strictly obligatory as a very holy *tradition* to which a good householder must strictly adhere .

Our *Grihyasūtras* and *Smritis* are based on the *Upaniṣadic* teachings (*vide Katha, Chandogya, Svetasvatara* particularly). *Martīyāni* too is useful like the *Maha Nārāyaṇya*

Mention may be made (for ready reference) of *Vyasa-saṃhita*, *Yajnavalkya-saṃhita*, *Manu-saṃhita*, *Bṛhat-parāśara*, *Dakṣa-smṛiti*, *Garudapurāṇa*, and portions of the *Mahābhārata* (e.g., *Santiparva* and *Kasikhaṇḍa*) The householder is the *Grihapati* of *Katyāyana*

but Grihamedha of the *Rig-veda*. In *Panini* he is *Grihastha*. He is otherwise known also as *Jyesthasami*, *Snataka* and *Dvityasami* and Manu calls him *Grihamedhin*. Special stress has even been laid by these *Sastras* on the characteristics of a true Brahman, who must school himself thoroughly into an ideal man by strictly following the *Veda*-prescribed rules of life aiming specifically at the control of the internal organ called अहंकार without which liberation (মুক্তি) is impossible. The Brahman householder's life is divided into nine sections covering his detailed duties from early dawn to late evening, the duties, again, being শাখিক, সামাজিক and পারত্রিক (i.e., physical, social and other-worldly).

THE INDIAN GRIHASTHA IDEAL

In its essence and main purport the ethico-social programme of our *Grihyasutras* and social codes like those of Manu, Maitreya, Yajnavalkya and others signifies (if concisely put) the imperative need of a regular system of *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) aiming at the merging, immersion, dissolving, like a lump of salt in ocean brine, of the individual ego in the Universal All-Comprehensive Over-soul—i.e., egoistic consciousness can fulfil itself by a process of self-realisation by which this consciousness by losing itself as a separate entity, however temporary, in Cosmic Super-consciousness and thereby really “finding” itself in its reality¹. The mystics' counsel is—“*He that loveth his life shall lose it*”

INDIA'S HEART-BEAT

It is *here* that Bharatvarsa's eternal vitality unconquered by historical cataclysms still pulsates, vibrates, concentrates itself. Here we must detect the true Mother India as a living, progressing, evolving, *dynamic* reality which conquers by the sword of the spirit all adverse forces, all passing vicissitudes of blind Fortune and by such a noble conquest India ever remains a change-free Truth (সত্য—*That Which ever Is*). Men may come and men may go,

¹ In his paper on “Spirit”, R. L. Nettleship nicely says that a thing in being what it is, becomes symbolic of more and that “the more it loses itself (what it began by being) the more it finds itself” (what it is intended to be). I will call it a supreme adventure of the soul. It is the soul's quest of Holy Grail and its consummation means the highest fruition possible for a created being. Just imagine what it signifies to be fulfilled in the One, the Real, the Absolute!

nations, races, conquerors, invaders, traducers, severely adverse critics too may come and go, but India, serene and self-possessed, mighty in her rich tradition handed down from the very dim Past, *goes on for ever*. There she stands four-square on her high pedestal of spiritual *sadhana* and from her supreme height has her Pisgah sight of the ever-changing, ever-rolling world of mere appearance, of what is always *in flux*, the inevitable flux of phenomenal existence. India's Elan Vital—the idea we take from Bergson's *L'Evolution Creatrice*—her *vital urge* which is well-nigh identical with life itself and which, as the Universe, functions to create the movement called progressive growth, is responsible for India's self-consciousness as if she were a living personality capable of triumphing over what we call *circumstances*. A decent—not scholarly—acquaintance with Bergson's three books (the other two being *Time and Free-Will* and *Matter and Memory* which appeared much earlier) enables every one to understand what he means by the word “*exist*”. In spite of changes “we endure”—*i.e.*, there is a self. This is man's common experience but Bergson shows that whatever endures does so “by change.” As beings our reality is change and the Universe is a stream of “becoming.” India believes, however, in something stable behind all change and not as one continuous flow except in Buddhistic philosophy with which the Vedanta is at variance. Yet Bergson holds that “it is by Intuition (and not Intellect) that we grasp the nature of reality as *an indivisible whole*” (*Italics mine*).

THE IDEAL OF GOOROODASS

We have just glanced at India's *soul* with a view to suggesting that this very soul of India was the *Ideal* of Gooroodass *to be realised in daily life*. This is the right approach to “Gooroodass the Man.” If we follow any other method we are at once on the wrong scent. Here is the present writer's main contention. If we care sincerely to understand, and, so, truly appreciate him, we must know, understand, appreciate *what he was as against what he merely did*. We all know how much he did and that in how many ways and also in how many capacities. But that is not the *central* thing, the problem before us. This writer cannot too strongly lay stress on this viewpoint. No one need agree with this view but the

view has its right to be stated for earnest consideration—may be, with the consequence of being rejected *in toto*. That matters not. What matters is that it should be dispassionately examined—scientifically, logically, rationally and thoroughly. It is the result of a long reflective process applied to the interpretation of the personality known as Gooroodass as seriously as is humanly speaking possible. Will it be rash to go so far as to say that to judge a *complex* phenomenon called “personality” by its outward manifestation of mere *deed*, “the thing done” and finished—action being so transient—not only does betray superficiality but also smacks of primitivism? The work done (be it in the shape of ritual sacrifices of a sacred character) relates to the *Purvamimansa* and we needed *Uttaramimansa* therefore, precisely as Christ was needed to fulfil the Mosaic Law. Professor Deussen very appropriately says in his *Philosophy of the Upanishads* that both (*Vedanta* and *Christ's Christianity*) make salvation dependent not on anything done or left undone, but on “a complete transformation of the natural man as a whole”. This writer could hardly put it better. Yet it is his own view.

Whoever shapes, regulates, fulfils his life's career of the proverbial three score years and ten in that *Upanishadic* way—which our *Grihyasutras* did accept—is to our mind the elect of God, has Divine grace to guide him as Socrates claimed to have been guided by his *daimon* (spiritual Genius, corresponding to the Christian guardian angel).

Our deliberate claim is that Gooroodass did it. Any other view of Gooroodass will only darken counsel by shutting the guiding light out. This brief study will remain incomplete if it does not dwell, as concisely as in the other case, on the fact (in the long run identical with the question of Gooroodass the ideal Hindu householder—really a thing different from what the English word connotes—rather the *Grihasthasrama*-ideal—realising Brahman as I should like to put it) that the man Gooroodass was a man after the *Gita* ideal.

These two, once more it must be emphasized, are correlated facets of one thing.

If once this is attempted to be realised it will at once follow that the ‘faculty psychology’ method is inapplicable to man,

the indivisible whole personality. Life too being one whole cannot be dissected. It is eternal—so mysterious yet so homely, so sad yet so sweet, precisely as Love or Beauty, both so ancient yet so ever new ! The Absolute manifests Itself in and through Life, Love, Beauty, Truth and Goodness and so these have *eternal* value.

In the abstract, logically, psychologically, we may speak of a man of action, a man of feeling and a man of thought or reflection, dividing men under three classes

In truth, a man is all the three, organically connected. The *Gita*'s magnificent harmony, synthesis, of জ্ঞান-কর্ম-ভক্তি (knowledge, work and devotion) rules out effectively this triple division of men as men of conation, emotion, cognition once for all.

Every man is one total self. That total self, again, is Brahman. Here is in a nutshell the Hindu view

“তত্ত্বমসি” (That thou art) “সর্বং খলুিদং ব্রহ্ম” (Verily all *that is* is Brahman) “নানৈহ নাস্তি কিঞ্চন” (plurality does not exist) “নাস্তি কিঞ্চন ব্রহ্মৈতবন্” (nothing exists which is other than Brahman) “শিবোহহম্” (I am Siva).

If one insists upon the psychological approach to Gooroodass, one has the choice, say, (1) of appraising Gooroodass as a man of deep thought in and through his “Thoughts on Education,” (2) of appraising him as a man of action through his work as a jurist, lawyer, judge, Vice-Chancellor of a great University, educationist, philanthropist, and so forth, and (3) of appraising him as a man of feeling through, pre-eminently, his exemplary relation with his mother and with the other members of his family, with his neighbours, servants, friends, acquaintances, the poor, the needy, the distressed or the down-trodden or the down-hearted.

Even then we would remind such a party never to lose sight of his কর্ম having been the *Gita* কর্মান্যাস, নিকায় কর্ম, কর্ম done in the spirit of সর্বং ব্রহ্মার্পণমস্তু (all be dedicated to the Lord). We would remind such a party to bear always in mind that his filial piety (*piety* it was) made him look on his earthly mother in the true Hindu way of realising that the mother is মৃগাদপি গবীযসী and, again, that she is allied to জগন্মাতা (the *Magna Mater* of the World). Nay with Gooroodass the man of feeling the Mother Ganges too counted—the mother whose sanctifying touch he craved and enjoyed when the moment of his well-earned

eternal repose drew nigh—and his soul's peace was assured by his consciousness that the five material elements composing his body would be in a holy fashion consigned to the all-purifying fire and the remains washed away *clean* with the sanctifying water of Mother Ganges poured befittingly by near and dear ones, pitcherful, in a sacramental, holy, Hindu way

Talking of emotion (expressed by and embodied in *love*), Gooroodass not only gave fully and freely love to One and all but *was as fully and freely loved* by one and all alike.

“Love and be loved”—is not that the highest social ideal? “*Amor omnia vincit*” The highest law too is the law of love. In our *Vedas* and *Upanishads* love is (1) नमः, (2) आनन्दम्, (3) श्रद्धा, (4) भक्ति and (5) प्रेम (the last, *Pauranic* and not *Upanishadic*). In Plato's *Symposium* it is the Ideal (only combined with Beauty)

Now, this popular method of studying a personality, and next, presenting scientifically the result of the study, is not without its *danger and uncertainty*. It has the easy virtue of saving strenuous intellectual effort to both the interpreter and those readers who readily accept what appeals to them as *easy*. Things ever become easy only by the sacrifice of what constitutes their *reality*, their essence, their inwardness, their ultimate significance—in short that which forms “the value” of each thing and cannot lie on the surface for every lazy man to pick up and put in his pocket. The danger lies in what the French beautifully call the *embarras de richesse* and the interpreter who masters a huge mass of disjointed biographical details invariably loses the forest in the trees and is bound to be “blind leader of the blind” in his interpretation of so baffling an entity as a human personality. The uncertainty is due to the sure lack of a principle of unity. The problem is the very old problem of the inherent difficulty involved in the relation of the One and the many. Readers of Plato (specially of the *Republic*, *Philebus*, *Timoeus*) need not be insulted by a reminder that this metaphysical question is a much vexed question—a veritable Serbonian bog where whole armies of critics have sunk. The immensely audacious huge number of the notorious *meo periculo* style of interpreters and critics may well be left to themselves—severely alone.

The One and the Many—"Being" and "Becoming"—The Real and the appearances, always stare us challengingly in the face whenever we seriously tackle any life problem.

"Gird your loins up" is the one motto here. Objections are here worse than futile. The Motto's concise reply to such is a warning—"Hands off?" This "hands off" is only a popular version of the Hindu philosophical অধিকারী ভেদ doctrine. Not all are privileged to "enter" here.

West meets East at a point—the point of conceiving philosophic *enthusiasm* (a sublimated variety of *Schwarmerei*) as assuming ultimately the "Form" (in Plato's language) of Love.

By way of illustration one may compare *Varanava-bhaktivada* culminating in the Gauriya শ্রম based on the Visistadvaita-vad of Ramanuja with the Platonic Ideal Love of Symposium based on the Platonic Idealism of his famous Theory of Ideas (Forms) with its mystic note lurking in Dialogues like *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Parmenides*, *Republic*, and specially *Philebus*, to name the chief ones only.

"In hours of reflective thought" apprehended, "in hours of insight" willed, but "in years of strenuous practice"—self-culture, self-discipline, self-restraint, self-abnegation, *self-realisation*, slowly, gradually, yet systematically, achieved, the True Life of the good man—essentially *one* with the divine life or, if we prefer, the Life Divine—once obscured by *Maya's* Magic—progressively marches on to fruition (mentioned at page *supra* 279 and page 289 *infra*), to its Destiny.

MAN'S DESTINY

We call it in various ways: the মোক্ষ (Liberation, Release) of the Advaitin (Vedantist), the কৈবল্য of the Dvaitin (Vaishnava) whose অবগতি, whose প্রপত্তি—absolute surrender to the Will Divine of Vishnu (Vedic), of Vasudeva (post-vedic), of Krishna (*Pauranic*) inducing close and intimate contact as not সাযুজ্য (merging of the individual in the Universal, of the many in One) but only সালোক্য and সানীপ্য (dwelling in one abode and standing in the fervour of intense spiritual love face to face with Love—Beauty symbolised by Radha-Krishna idea), the harmonising of individual will with the Will Supreme of the Lord (*cf*

Dante's *In la Sua voluntade e nostra pace*) to establish the Civitas Dei (kingdom, not merely city, of God *here* on earth through the God-Man, the Christus), the superb *समर्पण* (surrender) to Buddha, *Dharma* and *Sangha* (in the *ethico-intellectual* system of Gautama Buddha just falling short of religion proper as generally viewed, understood, interpreted and accepted by humanity), and, finally—to go to the Western fountain-head—Plato's Life Mixed of Thought, Science, Wisdom and of Sublimated Happiness (quite different from the ordinary Hedonist's Pleasure or Enjoyment) The whole world's Mysticism at its highest and best has called it (to use the expression of Plotinus) “the flight of the Alone to the Alone.”

One word more remains yet.

THE GITA IDEAL

The *Gita* Ideal of life is unfortunately more glibly talked about than truly understood. It is a sunken rock accounting for many a wreck. Suppose *we try* to steer clear of the danger. That presupposes a further measure of generous allowance on the reader's part as a concession more to the nature of our thesis than to its writer—who is not however poor in “beggarly thanks” for courteous attention given to him. No apology is needed for a *very humble* yet passionate striving after a ray of light. The *Gita* philosophizes a good deal only to be to us a *sure “way of life”*—precisely as the Vedanta does, though few will care to admit as much. We are pleased to relegate *Darsanas* to the limbo of airy speculation, just out of the urge of our instinct for *spiritual* self-preservation from the still small voice within us so ready to give us a short shrift when we merrily toss on our bed of roses even if we tread not the path of dalliance. Yet these *Darsanas* are more than practical in their aim. They want to guide us even in our mundane concerns. They do guide the deserving actually in their daily life—only they take us seriously. They take it for granted that we know that we have a soul and that we admit that it has to be saved. They honour us by taking it for granted that we all are bent upon utilising their aid honestly for the highest end of our life and so readily do they offer us their highest and best. We, on the contrary, sometimes at strife with our real well-being resent that they take so much for granted and we go about diligently to prove that they are wrong.

The *Gita* is based on the Hindu *Darsanas*—openly it admits it in the case of two systems at least, *viz*, the *Samkhya* and the *Yoga*. Its references to the Vedānta are obvious. The *Purva-mimamsa* too cannot be excluded from its purview in its treatment of action (কর্ম) or work.

Therefore we cannot shut out the following few observations as they are relevant to our study of Gooroodass whose one great resolve was to live as far as possible the *Gita* Ideal of life.

Here really was the will to live and not simply the will to believe—let alone the will to think, to do, and also to feel.

Moreover, it is in religion alone where is manifested unmistakably man's capacity of an "uncompromising loyalty to the highest." This truth is accepted by all thinking persons.

THE PLACE OF KNOWLEDGE IN LIFE

Ultimate knowledge or the highest wisdom has two aspects. One relates to the life of daily experience, of *relative* truth-consciousness-bliss. The other relates to life's fruition—in liberation or release from all earthly bondage, and as such to the life of the Absolute.

Psychology as a science will be too superficial if it ignores the fundamental relation existing between values (*viz*, man's interests and concerns) and the Idea of Reality. "The more interest there is in life generally," says Professor Hocking, "the more devotion is spent upon knowing reality for itself and *vice versa*."

These two aspects are organically interrelated as two sides of a single reality, of one indivisible whole—for mere convenience viewed as two aspects of the wisdom that is salvation (আপ্তজ্ঞান্ এবং মোক্ষঃ).

The *Nyaya-Vaisesika* (interconnected system of logical realism and pluralistic atomism) have, by critical examination of the empirical world established the truth that the soul is not merely the body to which common man attributes his sense of "I-ness" (আমি).

This type of knowledge is in our philosophy empirical (ব্যবহারিক) which, still, comprehends all aspects of human experiences as such, attempting at the same time to build a philosophical system with results not quite satisfactory.

The *Varsesika* particularly has more scientifically investigated the world of experience in a naturalistic way, sense-data being frankly recognised as not a part of mind (as Buddhism holds)

Things, their attributes, and relatedness of them are completely accepted, even though (philosophically) they are attributed to the action of atoms as cause. The trend, unfortunately, is, after all, materialistic. So the system fails to give us a rational view or interpretation even of the *entire* world of experience. It marks, however, an advance upon the logician's subtle analysis, however admirable, of the thought process as a sheer abstraction.

To anticipate things a little, let us refer here to *Brahmasutram* II, 3-17—where the *Sutra* says 'empirically it is true that objects in the world of experience have really then separate existence and are separately named, though *essentially* Brahman appears as such by reason of its assuming *name and form*'.

The *Samkhya* affords us a comprehensive view of the universe as a whole and its analysis of experience is very valuable, furnishing, as it does, with its detailed study of the twenty-five essential principles, the metaphysical background of the *Yoga* system of practical spiritual discipline of complete control of the mind.

For liberation, *Samkhya's* emphasis is on knowledge whereas the *Yoga's* is on concentration, on freedom from distractions.

The *Gita* (XIII, 24) refers to three forms of *Yoga*—of meditation (ध्यान), of knowledge (ज्ञान) and of action or work (कर्म). The deepest and the most intense concentration of the mind by means of suppression of all mental activities results in mental equipoise as achieved in *samadhi*. Here is the conquest of all desires which are the cause of re-birth (संसृति). It leads to beatitude.

This extremely brief survey (serving for a background) will enable us to place the subject of our study in its proper perspective. We shall have Gooroodass considered as man in the relevant context of his entire environment. If time and space had permitted a survey *in this context* of a large number of details of facts relating to his family, his early life, his education and home training; his privations, struggles, efforts, hardships, frustrations, unsure purposes, his indomitable will, his temperamental reactions, his thoughts, ideas, ideals, his feeling and emotions, his partial successes and

failures and ever-renewed endeavours, his chief aim in life, his favourite pursuits, his hopes, fears, his desires, the checks and counter-checks he applied to them, his disappointments, and possibly moments of despondency, moments of exhaustion, his *temptations*, his *conflicts*, the way these were overcome or resolved; his net achievements; his relations with all and sundry that got into close touch with him in all his walks of life and in all the different spheres of his activities; the factors that played their essential part in shaping and moulding him into what he became, and, specially his *consciousness*, whether ever-present or otherwise, of having a *definite ideal* (deliberately chosen) of life as of his having always been religiously true to that ideal—all the mass of details, *thus* studied, could have enriched the contents of the outline we have sketched in our study according to our own plan. But that would not simply make the size of this essay unmanageable for an essay but even *blur the main issue*, unless details could be handled in such a masterly fashion as to keep what the Greeks call *due measure*, *due proportion*; in a word, unless the total result would be a *harmony*. This work of a supreme artist is, we confess, beyond us. The majority of the hundreds of biographies I have gone through have disappointed us—judged by this standard. Besides, my definite purpose in the selection of our theme in the *form* we have intentionally given it, would have in this contingency been defeated.

THE SUPREME NEED OF KNOWLEDGE

The good life—this being for each individual his loyalty to what his idea of the true and of life makes for him the categorical imperative, the highest loyalty being reserved for his religious life alone—necessarily implies a clear knowledge of what constitutes the Good. Roughly, is it Wisdom (*ज्ञानम्*, *दर्शनम्*) or even the best form of Happiness? Does it lie chiefly in Intellectualism, Idealism or in Hedonism? Plato's *Philebus* was obliged to thoroughly go into this momentous question as a serious problem for man.

The *acting* of Justice, for instance, entirely depends upon the knowing of what Justice is in its very essence. Yet even Plato's philosophy leaves room for the possibility of virtue without *perfection* of Knowledge. Samkara is more uncompromising. In his *Republic* Plato indicates that human nature, suitable (*...*)

অধিকারী) for its reception, may, by means of self-culture, so educate the body and train the mind completely and rightly that predominance of virtue may be secured. In a way this also is the Indian scheme of *Sadhana*—including its three *Yogas* unified by the *Gita* in a synthesis of জ্ঞান-ভক্তি-কর্ম (wisdom-devotion-work) Does not Plato too develop the same idea in his *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Republic*, *Gorgias* (with its noted dictum of “right will being all in all,” practically somewhat in the fashion of the Buddhistic ethical programme), *Protagoras*, *Philebus* and *Laws*?

NET RESULT OF TRUE CULTURE

Thus cultured, a man has hardly in him anything left *irrational* requiring sublimation. In short, this is the one practical application of philosophy to the bettering of human existence. The bettered life is self-fulfilment. Ancient Greece emphasized the excellence of ideal *civic* life, for obvious reasons. Indian's trend has been towards self-fulfilment by self-possession (স্বাধিকার) i.e., self-conquest through self-knowledge (আত্মজ্ঞান¹ বিদ্বি). Self-knowledge was the keystone of the Sociatic programme too (“Know thyself”). Ancient Greece and more ancient India did meet—specifically at Alexandria in the days of Philo and his associates and followers. But that long story is neither here nor there so far as our theme is concerned in its extreme brevity.

Gooroodass aimed at the good *life*. He did all he could to achieve that aim.² It is not for us to assess the extent of his success in his aim. Nay, we have not the impertinent curiosity to pry into the secret history of his life and go a-hunting (like a gossip-monger) for *facts* for and against the conclusion that his was indeed a successful good life after the Indian pattern of the combined *Gita ideal* and the *Grhya-sutra* injunctions meant for the stage of *Varnashrama* known as গার্হস্থ্য (the householder's life). It is a conviction with us that the Man Gooroodass is writ large in that history of his life which goes by the name of biography. We are sure the Centenary Memorial volume (or whatever its name may be) is in the hands of able editorship and the editor will have secured competent writers who will have done ample justice to our hero's life history—who

¹ *Vide* for the Neo-Platonic re-affirmation of this supremely important injunction (বিদ্বি) The *Enneads* of Plotinus, VI 97, which is far long to quote here.

² I would refer my readers to Plato's *Republic*, Bk V.

will have said a world of admirable things, regarding Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, the first Indian Vice-Chancellor of the premier Indian University, the renowned lawyer, and the all-respected and highly reputed High Court Judge, the great educationist, the worthy Hindu, if not Brāhman, the ideal friend, ideal husband, ideal neighbour, ideal father and *above all* the ideal son, the true friend of the needy, the distressed, the neglected, the down-hearted and the down-trodden

For a personal explanation—

We have “chosen our Chalcedon with the full view of Byzantium before our eyes” Deliberately have we set ourselves an unpleasant task In fulfilling it honestly—keeping a sacred, cherished memory ever before us in aid of our meekly humble endeavour—we have had to strip Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, of all his superb trappings remarkably ornamental, but in his case not in the least ostentatious—and to lay him bare to the gaze of scrutiny—apparently an in-human process But, let us kindly, repeat—the die was cast and no choice was left but the one of crossing the Rubicon

The gods were generously liberal in their gifts showered upon Gooroodass. He had solid yet unostentatious knowledge as the foundations of his vivid imagination and his penetrating insight, he added to these himself a strenuous life of ceaseless endeavour after the ideal life of the world famous Indian sage-saints, our beacon lights in the darkest hours of trial, his immediate inheritance was deep piety and holiness Straightforwardness, sincerity, candour, meek humility the special gift of the goddess of wisdom, the *Rig-Vedic* Saraswati reshaped by the Age of *Pauranic* myths,—were all his to a degree He acquired the courage of conviction which alone gives frail humanity the firmness of moral strength that never swerves from the straight path of rectitude His love for man exceeded on occasions his love for his kith and kin, for his distant relations, friends, acquaintances He ever had a sympathetic heart beating in loving compassion *with* the needy, distressed poor, down-trodden—the host of the world's disinherited many—which he never permitted to degenerate into patronising pity for those less fortunate in life's mysterious lottery than himself Truth and honesty he adored as any man can In a word our Gooroodass strictly kept himself in the narrow and uneven path not beaten to

smoothness by many a treading foot strengthened in this moral resolve by faith in God unshakable and as strong a belief or conviction that eventually Righteousness alone prevaileth. His affability was charming, as charming were his inborn courteous manners. We felt more than once how spontaneously he with perfect ease drew us of the younger generation within the charmed circle of his unique personality and made us—one and all—feel perfectly at home there.

GOOROODASS THE DOER OF DEEDS

Here in short is our sample of what *Gooroodass the man did* out of what he was. To me Gooroodass is a dynamic and vitalising personality, a fairly full man. The man Gooroodass will be perfectly useless to Bengal of the present and the future if Bengalis care not for emulating him but complacently extol him to the skies at centenary or other celebrations with all the gust of romantic effusion unchecked and unrestrained by a classic reserve, moderation, by the Platonic *μετρος* (Measure, Symmetry, Harmony) which is the soul of the culture of the great Hellenes.

Let Bengal decide. God's choicest blessings will always be with her if her sons and daughters of the twentieth century *take seriously* a solemn function like the Gooroodass Centenary, or even, the so-called *Jayantis* whose name is legion. The days of solid men like Rammohun, Vidyasagar, Vivekananda, Gooroodass *seem* to have *temporarily* gone to be resuscitated again, *for certain*, in the fulness of His time that makes the universe (not simply Nature) work *ohne haste ohne rast*. And we have, therefore, hardly any rational cause for despondency, let alone numbing despair. The birth of Bengal's son, Gooroodass, is to us an historical event of serious import—is he not a continuance down to our own day of India's one great tradition of a living intercourse with Reality, *realised* by means of true allegiance in daily life to the *Gita-cum-Garhastya* Ideal?

If once we can free our minds from confusion of thought and the worse confusion of the standards of value, we can at once decide upon spiritual freedom for man to be his real destiny, his real aim and end. Political freedom, economic self-sufficiency, the best of creature comforts, the immense advantages gained from the progress made

by applied science, mass education, industrial and commercial enterprise, and the thousand and one other modern conveniences of life are, when all is said, no better than means to an end. To accept these as ends in themselves, though they may even be conceded to be indispensable to life as it is under modern conditions, is a fundamental error. We do not prescribe to one and all the ancient Indian ideal or tradition so universal over this vast continent, roughly up to the 15th or 16th century India. Yet we expect the modern Indian to be able to properly evaluate it even when he rejects it completely and takes to the Western "way of life"—be it of the Third International type. He must not in the hurry of the speed age or in the mechanical manner of the machine-age, deal out to it Jedwood justice.

THE MAIN PURPOSE OF GOOROODASS AND THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF HIS CHARACTER

Gooroodass, for example, stuck to India's tradition, to India's ideal—beyond all dispute. He was not a modern in the general sense of the word as used today. Rather was his a conservative way of life inspite of his thorough Western education and none of his enemies even will refuse to call him a highly educated man, *educated* under the prevailing Western system. He was no product of the *Tol* system. He was rather like Bankim judged as an educated man. Still his was reverence genuine and deep for India's past—verging upon piety, filial, to Mother India. And that side of his life and character appeals powerfully to the present writer who is also in his own way *a modern*. It is not necessary for any one to hold brief for the India that is real, that is true, that is the heart and soul of the Orient and possibly that is destined to help the Occident out of its present hopelessness. India today is not isolated from the rest of the world. The impact of the West on her is tremendous—sometimes disastrous. Humanity is one—races, nations, communities many. Civilisation and culture too are essentially one—the forms being many. Man's destiny is one. His ultimate end too is one. Unity reigns supreme in diversity and multiplicity.

We will, now, attempt a sort of summary estimate. Not that life or personality can be squeezed into a handy formula.

Nothing of the kind A personality is a mysterious totality which knows how to demolish all attempts at formulation however clever. Be speculative or experiential, philosophical or scientific as an investigator of truth, you dig your own grave the moment you launch on such an enterprise. Even then keeping fully in view the danger and uncertainty of the business, one may try to put in a nutshell the main drift of his thesis.

We all know what happened to Goethe and Schiller both as the result of their very intimate contact with each other in the 90's of the eighteenth century at Jena and Weimar respectively. Our reader's attention will in this connection be drawn to the resulting scheme of Schiller (1795) in the shape of his '*Musenalmanach*'. The relevant bearing of it is this —In a poem named *Das Ideal und das Leben* (something like '*The Realm of Shadows*') the governing and guiding idea of Schiller is beautifully embodied and that very briefly too. The idea may be put thus : We, human beings having any real culture, may, if we determine, escape from the narrow, hide-bound limits of daily life—rather dry, drab, routine, inelastic and unpromising to true spiritual development—into an *invisible* world, lying so to say beyond what is sense-perceived, *where duty as duty is absorbed in spontaneous inclination*, and when that is consummated, man does achieve his real and final destiny free from all conflicts or consequent suffering.

Now, we propose to clinch our main drift in the pages that have gone before with the aid of this formulated *principle* borrowed from Schiller's deep experience (*vide* page 292 *supra*)

The poem referred to closes with *man's* passage to an *ideal world* from the actual symbolised in the destiny of the heroic Alcides. A false and cheap cosmopolitanism may be quickly achieved by the process of denationalisation. But no one becomes a citizen of the world merely by being untrue to his own city. By all means let us have a world vision, broad-based, and fling our imagination forward beyond all bounded horizons to the enchanting distant one where may dimly loom the golden vision of the Federation of All Mankind, a magnificent politico-economic consummation devoutly to be wished. Will Indians in that fulness of time cease altogether to be Indians? We doubt. - India has a world contribution to make which she cannot make by her self-immolation

however heroic or altruistic. If this view be correct, Gooroodass was thoroughly right in having maintained India's own traditional "way of life" in the face of criticism none too liberal, or generous, or enlightened. But being a *true* man he was true to himself, for, he was true to India. That is the Indian man we are attempting to properly appreciate, let alone our personal loving regard, our personal reverence for his character, his personality, his greatness, his worth, his example.

He lived like a man and to be man is a steep uphill work. He acquired the right to tell us—"Be like me"—and, secondarily, also, "go forth into the world and *do* likewise"

OUR DUTY

The quality of our Centenary celebration sincerity will be tested by "how and to what extent" we respond to his call. The memory of a great man is best cherished in one way only—by emulating him and in no other

Do we, *indeed*, today emulate him? Do we not seek for guidance elsewhere? Are not the youth of this land often seriously advised by their own chosen guides to look—to give only one instance so glaring—more to S S S R than to the India adored, loved, even worshipped by Gooroodass? It is a question not to be disposed of flippantly. Men have the right to differ. Men must be allowed to freely choose their good life. Are they not bound to rationally ascertain what the *good* life is? Even *morals change*. True, Ethics is man-made. Is there nothing that is God-made?—provided, of course, God is permitted to be. All this has cost this writer hard-thinking of late. But he of all men will never sermonize.

This short study has presented the life's ideal of Gooroodass. It is not impertinent, and, so it will not enquire to what extent the ideal was actualised by Gooroodass. We know his was a very sincere, very honest endeavour after that ideal. We know he shrank not for a moment for any consideration to strictly adhere to it. To deviate from what Gooroodass conscientiously believed to be true, right, just, pure, sacred, was for him inconceivable. He was human; he may have erred but *untrue to his ideal he never was*. His was a *strict* life but he gave Caesar and the devil both their just due. His spirit triumphed over the flesh—but never by mortifying, starving even the flesh. Browning will better speak for him in his inimitable diction—

“ For pleasant is this flesh ”

* * * * *

“ Let us not always say
Spite of this flesh today
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole.”

* * * * *

“ To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone way ?”

Our revered Gooroodass had a slender, rather short, lean, well-nigh frail body. But *indwelling there*, was a *soul of heroic stature*, more Promethean than Herculean, for ever and ever, *unbound* to the encasing flesh which, however had seldom to be denied for it had been made by his life-long *sadhana*, definitely Indian, too helpful to be denied.

I bow in salutation and obeisance to the high-minded, high-souled, high-aiming, high-thinking though plain-living *man* whose place may be among the gods. He stands even today before my admiring gaze, before my mental vision high, in the might of his soul's immensity. He is to me an inspiration, a sure source of spiritual strength in the moment of what is very trying for man as man, *viz*, in the moment of *apparent conflict* of duties and does point the way that never leads one astray. That sufficeth for me and I take respectfully leave of him. But his memory is enshrined and cherished as it should be in the deeper depth of my heart. Peace ! ॐ शान्तिः ! Yea, verily, शान्तिः is with the good soul of Gooroodass in the Eternal Silence that has lovingly hailed him—freed from his external vesture—the pure, in the fashion his earthly life, elevated and sanctified by the devotion to the Indian Ideal quietly realised, so richly deserved. And nothing is left now to be desired by devoted friends and admirers.

SIR GOOROODASS BANERJEE—A LAWYER AND A JUDGE

SHYAMACHARAN MITTER

Sir Rashbehary Ghose as Tagore Professor of Law (1875-76) in the University of Calcutta concluded his classical lectures on the Law of Mortgage with the epigraphy.—

“ But a higher guerdon awaits those who pursue learning for its own sake ; and I invite you to join that noble band to which so many are called and so few are chosen ; for the dust of daily life tends to deaden those finer sentiments to which life should owe its savour. I do not by any means ask you to live in cloistered seclusion, detached from the world and all its pursuits, but do not, I pray you, be too eager in the chase of money, position or power. For, believe me, you cannot fall into the habit of prizing low and gross ideals without suffering deterioration in your intellectual as well as moral fibre. Learn, therefore, betimes to labour and to wait ; and if you are ever tempted to join in the fierce hunt after the vulgar prizes of the world, remember that, after all, the successful man as he is called is not unfrequently :

“ A poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

And then is heard no more.”

The career of Sir Gooroodass in the domain of law typified an ideal, a standard which one would aspire and wish to attain. It may be said at the outset that the life of Sir Gooroodass realised and revealed in all its phases in full display one line of decision—sincerity, honesty and truth. The story of his life is the story of the triumph of an honest, upright and brilliant career and of success emerging from the domination of higher over lower springs of action. The same qualities of character also permeated and pervaded his life in the field of law. His career was not a flashlight of only an outstanding intellectual genius wrapping one in the intensity of darkness that follows an effulgence ; but the sharpness of his intellect set in the mould of his character cast a soothing halo of light which embraces and impresses the mind with a lasting fascination of sweetness and charm and perennially lives in the consciousness of the society and has left its mark graven deep on the generations to come. The harmonious cohesion of intellect and character earned for him the laurels of distinction, admiration and reverence. Every phase of his life has left the imprint of an ideal and marks the march of a consistent and philosophic soul. Mr. Gooroodass Banerjee was in the practice of his profession for a little over two decades. He took the M A degree in Mathematics in 1865 and secured the University gold medal. Shortly

after he was appointed Assistant Lecturer in Mathematics at the Presidency College at Calcutta temporarily for one year. In January, 1866, he was appointed Professor of Mathematics in the General Assembly's Institution (now Scottish Church College) and in that year he passed the B.L. Examination and stood first. He got himself enrolled as a Vakil of the Calcutta High Court but he did not commence practising there. He got an appointment as Law Lecturer and a Lecturer in Mathematics in the Berhampur College (District Moorshidabad, Bengal) and he resigned his post in the General Assembly's Institution. His duties as a Lecturer in the Berhampur College kept him employed for only two hours in the morning from 9 A.M. to 11 A.M. and he was permitted to practise in the local courts at Berhampur. He joined the District Bar and within a short time he got into extensive practice and became the retained legal adviser of Nawab Nazeem of Moorshidabad, and a retained pleader of the estate of Maharanee Swarnamoyee of Cossimbazar and of other leading landholders of the district. He was resourceful and he had the tact of persuasiveness. We are told that during the earlier days of his practice he won a criminal case by quoting the following verse from Kalidas's *Sakuntala* before the Magistrate, Mr. W. L. Heely, who was at first very much against the cause he represented —

“ সতীমপি জ্ঞাতিকুলৈকসংশ্রয়াং
 জনো'ন্যথা ভর্তৃমতীং বিশঙ্কতে ।
 অতঃ সঙ্গীপে পবিণেতুবিষ্যতে
 প্রিয়া'প্রিয়া বা প্রমদা স্ববকুভিঃ ॥ ”

(The character of a woman, although she is chaste, is suspected by the people if she lives in her father's place. It is, therefore, proper for a wife to repair to her husband's place.)

In the case aforesaid Mr Gooroodass Banerjee was opposed by all the leading lawyers of Berhampur and his success in the case established his reputation as a good criminal lawyer and he too at the beginning of his practice preferred to conduct criminal cases. He, however, rigidly observed the rules of conduct and maintained the dignity of the profession. He would never accept any case from any tout or intermediary or so-called agents. Mr. Gooroodass Banerjee was always straightforward and never hesitated to express his independent opinion. In a suit between the Nawab Nazeem

and a rich Khoja Mahomedan gentleman Mr Ashutosh Chatterjee, was engaged as the senior pleader of the Nawab Nazeem. As chance would have it, Mr Gooroodass Banerjee was present at the time the Dewan of the Nawab Nazeem was having consultations regarding the case with Mr Chatterjee who advised that the Nawab Nazeem had no chance of success and the suit should be compromised. The Dewan asked the opinion of Mr Gooroodass Banerjee and the latter expressed an opinion different from Mr. Chatterjee's. Although a mere beginner in the profession, Mr. Gooroodass Banerjee did not hesitate to speak out his own views. One cannot but admire that he had not what is commonly found, but must be deprecated, juniority complex. The Dewan informed the Nawab Nazeem of it and he directed also to get the opinion of Mr Gooroodass Banerjee in writing. The matter was referred to Mr R. V. Doyne, a leading Barrister practising in the High Court at Calcutta and he fully agreed with the opinion of Mr Banerjee. The suit was contested by the Nawab Nazeem following the said opinion and the success of the Nawab Nazeem in the suit resulted in the selection and confirmation of Mr. Gooroodass Banerjee as the legal adviser of Nawab Nazeem. Raja Prosonno Kumar Deb was the Dewan of the Nawab Nazeem at that time and previously he was requested by Babu Ganganaram Ganguli, maternal uncle of Mr Gooroodass Banerjee to appoint his nephew as the retained legal adviser of the Nawab Nazeem which post had fallen vacant by the death of Babu Ramanath Nandi who was also a Lecturer at the Berhampur College and it was on his death and in his place that Mr Gooroodass Banerjee was appointed a Lecturer of the said college. The Dewan was then misled by the natural gentleness of Mr Gooroodass Banerjee and he mistook it to be shyness and felt dubious to engage him at that time.

Mr Gooroodass Banerjee stayed at Berhampur for about six years, and at the particular desire of his mother he returned to Calcutta. When he left Berhampur Mr E. Grey, the then District Judge, spoke of him as follows —

“ Babu Gooroodass Banerjee had been a pleader in my Court for the period during which I have held the office (nearly four years). During that time he has invariably conducted his duties in a thoroughly efficient manner and I consider that the Court will be a great loser by his departure ”

Mr. Hand, the Principal of the Berhampur College also spoke highly of his success and efficiency as a teacher. He said "the Annual Reports . . . show the marked success of his teaching; and in the interest of the Institution I much regret that circumstances had induced him to give up his duties that above six years he has so faithfully and efficiently discharged."

Towards the close of 1872 Mr Gooroodass Banerjee returned to Calcutta and began his practice in the High Court. In 1876 he passed the Honours Examination in law. The subjects chosen by him were "The Necessity of Religious Ceremonies in Adoption" and the "Hindu Law of Endowment" and his essays on each of these subjects bore proofs of his erudition, extensive study and depth of knowledge. He obtained the degree of Doctor of Law in 1877. In 1878 he was appointed Tagore Law Professor. The subject of his lectures was the "Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhana." It is a triumph of erudition and research and constitutes a contribution of enduring value to the legal literature of India.

Dr. Gooroodass Banerjee was in the practice of his profession in the High Court for about 16 years and although he was distinguishing himself at the Bar, professional success was not to him an all-absorbing passion and he always tried to do his duty as a citizen and serve the interest of the people and the country to which he belonged. He was appointed a Fellow of the Calcutta University in 1879. In 1885 he served as a member of the Commission to determine the boundaries of Calcutta. In 1886 he was appointed an Honorary Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta and in that year he was also elected a Commissioner of the suburban municipality. In 1887 he was appointed a member of the Bengal Legislative Council.

To use the memorable words of President Taft of the United States of America "The country must train lawyers of the right sort and of the old spirit to advise or it must tumble through a very chaos of blind experience. It needs lawyers who are also statesmen more than it needs them now. It needs them in its courts, in its legislature, in its seats of executive authority,—lawyers who can think in terms of society itself" Lord Haldane, Lord Chancellor of England, also echoed the same sentiment in his famous address on "Higher Nationality." The life of Sir Gooroodass

Banerjee exhibited a synthetic arrangement of all the parts which are extolled and acclaimed in all countries as the ideal of an able and efficient lawyer. He attained academic distinction. He was honest, upright, sincere, independent and diligent. He was able and efficient. The numerous cases in which he appeared and which are to be found strewn in the Law Reports bear testimony to his study, application and skill in advocacy. "That those whose purpose it is to practise ought to be held to make proof of their studies, of their capacity, of their good morals and of their probity is absolutely indispensable." An extract from a famous opening passage of Digest of Justinian may appropriately be noticed in this connection.

"Law is the art of what is good and equitable of which lawyers are deservedly called the priests, for they cultivate justice and profess a close knowledge of what is good and equitable, separating the equitable from the inequitable, distinguishing the lawful from the unlawful, desiring to make man good, not only from the fear of punishment but also from the influence of rewards, maintaining, if I err not, a true not a pretended philosophy."

The profound erudition, high sense of duty, manifold qualities of character and the activities of Mr. Gooroodass Banerjee in and outside the court raised him considerably in the estimation of the public and it was no wonder that Sir Conur Patheram, the then Chief Justice, would annex the services of so good a man and so able a lawyer and suggest the name of Dr. Gooroodass Banerjee for appointment as a Judge of the Hon'ble High Court. In 1888, on the retirement of Cunningham, J., Dr. Gooroodass Banerjee was appointed a Judge of the High Court. There was a country-wide feeling of satisfaction at his elevation to the Bench and during his sixteen years work on the Bench Dr. Gooroodass Banerjee fully justified the expectations of the people. The judgments he rendered were always thorough and learned. Their value as contributions to the Indian Law is well-recognised and well-appreciated.

Among the many reported decisions pronounced by Sir Gooroodass Banerjee or to which he was a party we may notice *Kamini-vs-Chandra* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol XVII, page 373) which mitigated the rigour of the law as laid down by the old Full Bench case of *Kashinath-vs.-Kshetramani* (Sutherland's

Weekly Reporter, Vol. IX, page 413) by recognising the rule that moral obligation of an ancestor would ripen into a legal obligation affecting the estate in the hands of the heir or legal representative, and, it is still now the established rule of law; *Mandakini-vs.-Admath*, (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol XVIII, page 69) which lays down an important rule relating to the law as to the divesting of estates on adoption; *Gur Baksh-vs.-Jowahir* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XX, page 599) which established that the relationship of cause and effect between irregularity and material injury which is a single plea in the statutory rule for setting aside an execution sale (old section 311 now Order XXI, rule 90 of the Code of Civil Procedure) may be established in any manner recognised by the Evidence Act; *Mahesh-vs.-Saroda* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXI, page 433) which recognised that a part of a holding with rent or rate of rent fixed in perpetuity governed by the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, was transferable; *Abdul Mozumdar-vs.-Mahomed Gazi* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXI, page 605) which recognised that a suit will lie to set aside a decree and a sale in execution of the decree when the decree and sale are both impeached on the ground of fraud; *Jagadanand-vs -Amrita* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXII, page 767) in which he delivered the judgment of the full court laying down the principle regarding retrospective operation of status; *Queen Empress-vs.- Kader* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXIII, page 604) which contains an important pronouncement as the law relating to insanity as affecting criminal responsibility; *Ishan-vs.-Beni* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXIV, page 62) which may be regarded to have settled the meaning of the term "Representative" in section 244 (now section 47) of the Code of Civil Procedure; *Bhram Ali-vs -Gopi* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXIV, page 355) which had an important bearing on the law relating to the saleability of occupancy holdings in execution; *Hemadri-vs -Ramon*, (*Indian Law Reports*, Vol XXIV, Calcutta Series, page 575) which recognised the right of a Patnidar to have a partition as against the superior landlord; *Jagannath-vs -Ranjit* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol XXV, page 354) which laid down the view of the Calcutta High Court regarding the application of

Arts 118 and 119 of the Indian Limitation Act (*i e*, Limitation of Suits for declaring the validity or invalidity of adoption), *Rai-charan-vs.-Kumud* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol XXV, page 571) which has an important bearing on the question relative to the concurrence of jurisdiction touching the law of Res Judicata (bar of the decision of an issue in a subsequent suit by reason of previous adjudication on the particular issue); *Kadambini-vs -Kali* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXVI, page 516) recognised easements arising as a severance of tenements on partition; *Nisachand-vs-Kanchiram* (*Indian Law Reports*, Calcutta Series, Vol. XXVI, page 579) which expressed the view of the Calcutta High Court whether previous possession less than the statutory period of 12 years is a sufficient basis for an action in ejectment.

During the period Sir Gooroodass held his tenure of office as a Judge he not only made valuable contributions to the interpretation of law but he endeared himself to everybody by his uniform kindness, just consideration and unfailing courtesy. He was held in high respect as a Judge on account of his strong sense of justice, his great learning, high talents and the conscientious discharge of his duties. In spite of the natural gentleness of his character and his austere and pious Hindu spirit of never making himself unnecessarily hurtful to others, be it the other brother Judges or the members of the profession, there never was any weakness in his mind, no swerving from what he thought to be right and proper. He was an independent judge and he always stood firm to the call of duty and to his own conclusions of justice and propriety. This is borne out by his dissentient judgments in court. He was simple and unassuming in nature and in him there was such harmonious combination of head and heart, character and intellect, study and culture, independence and reason, virtue and religion that any country may justly feel proud of reckoning such a noble personality as one of its sons. Early in 1904 Sir Gooroodass retired from the Bench full of honours and the reverent references made of him at the time of his retirement vouch for the achievement and appreciation of Sir Gooroodass and contains a correct criticism of his career in the realm of law.

The address presented by the Vakeels of the High Court was in these terms :—

“My Lord, It is with feelings of deepest sorrow that we, the Vakeels of this Court, approach Your Lordship to bid you farewell on the eve of your retirement from the Bench, which you have so conspicuously adorned for the last fifteen years. Your career as a Judge has been characterised throughout by profound learning, great ability, thorough conscientiousness, marked independence, untiring patience and uniform courtesy—qualities by which you have always inspired confidence in the public mind and commanded the respect and admiration of all branches of the profession. Your successful and brilliant career as a Judge is a source of pride to the members of the profession to which you belonged, and will always be an illustrious example to that body. In common with the public, we realise in your retirement a heavy loss to the country. While discharging your arduous duties as a Judge, you have not been sparing in your labours for the advancement of the country in educational and other matters. As the first Indian Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, you secured to the graduates of the University many valuable privileges and you have always worked for the welfare of our youths with singular wisdom and zeal. Your private life has throughout been a model to our countrymen while your public career in all its phases has been worthy of the highest praise. And now in taking leave of you, we fervently hope and pray that many years of health may yet be vouchsafed to you to work with greater strength and vigour in the various spheres of usefulness in which you have always moved.”

The Advocate-General Hon Mr. J T Woodroffe, said —
 “....upon the tomb of one of the noblest of her sons whom England has given to India is to be found inscribed the epitaph ‘He tried to do his duty’ No man can have a higher aim and no man can honestly say more of himself than that. Happy, indeed, is he if he is able to say it, for when the time of reckoning comes we are all conscious how utterly we have failed to discharge the duties imposed on us. But you, My Lord, have tried, and nobly tried, and so far as the Bar can see, have succeeded in discharging the duties which you took upon you. The address which

has been read to us describes in no exaggerated language your character and your ability as a Judge. I will only say so far as my experience goes, which extends over the whole time of your Lordship's career as a Judge never have I heard a single suitor complain that full justice had not been done to him by Mr. Justice Gooroodass Banerjee, that his case had not been listened to with attention, all the arguments weighed and every effort made to understand what it was, and he felt that if the case was decided against him it was rightly decided. You have also shown a character of independence. You have spoken when silence might have pointed out the line of least resistance. You have been throughout your career as a pleader and a Judge, if I may be permitted to say so, most eminently straight-forward, honest and conscientious . . . ”

THE MEMORY OF AN EVENING

ASUTOSH BAGCHI

During that most glorious and efflorescent days of the 'Swadesi Movement' when Bengal was in the forefront of national reawakening of India, the country was leaving behind its meandering course of mendicancy and was launching upon the untrodden track of self-help and self-reliance and steadily but firmly coming to its own. Giants of intellect like Gooroodass Banerjee, Rash Behary Ghose, Surendranath Banerjee, Ramendrasundar Tivedi, Asutosh Chaudhuri, Harendra Nath Datta and Satischandra Mukherji—to name only a few of them—some of whom were stalwarts of the then Senate of the Calcutta University founded the National Council of Education. Gooroodas was the first Vice-President of the Council. The Bengal National College established at Calcutta by the Council started its brief but momentous career in August, 1906, with a band of brilliant and self-sacrificing teachers with Sri Anubindo at their head. Many of them, alas, are no more in our midst to-day and the present generation does not know them even by name.

Gooroodass with the unflagging zeal of a youth always took a leading and active part in the deliberations and efforts of the

Council and the College in formulating schemes and drawing up courses of studies. He never spared any pains in bringing the Council to maturity and fruition.

Under the auspices of this Council Rabindranath delivered a series of lectures in Bengali in the premises of the National College then located on the Bowbazar street very close to the hall of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science. The first lecture was delivered in an April afternoon of 1907. The seating arrangement was made in right Indian style on the spacious roof of the college building under a canopy. Besides the Professors and students of the College there was a distinguished gathering of eminent members of the Council headed by Gooroodass.

Rabindranath appeared at the meeting robed in white *dhoti* and *chadar*. He took his seat arranged in the manner of a *Kathak* on a low wooden stool and was garlanded. The Poet then read out his first lecture entitled 'Saundaryabodh' or Aesthetic Enjoyment from a proof copy in his sweet sonorous voice uninterrupted by applause—a thing deeply disliked by him throughout his life. Those present—one and all—remained spell-bound for some time. The physical presence of one of the handsomest of men—looking like a Rishi—and the delivery of the lecture in an unheard of melodious voice were a feast both to the eyes and ears of the youthful students present there.

The Poet then rose from his seat and with the humility so natural to him invited criticism of his paper from his elders present. Dr 'P. K. Ray, the great savant who had just retired from the principalship of the Presidency College, first responded to the Poet's invitation by simply saying that with the exception of one they were all his disciples there. Then rose Gooroodass—modesty incarnate—and spoke in gentle accents that the lecture was an unexpected treat to him and he had not come prepared for it. He should read it once, twice, after it had been published and then would speak out his mind about it. In the glow of the evening sun the venerable old man's face was beaming with joy.

In that mood of ecstasy he went on saying that such literary masterpieces rich in their profundity of thought and majesty of expression ought to be rendered into English so that Englishmen should come to know what priceless treasures were being stored

up in the Bengali literature. 'Nay, a time would come when Englishmen would learn Bengali to read the Poet's writings.'

Not many years after these prophetic words were uttered by this great sage that the Poet was appreciated and honoured by the West which offered him the highest literary distinction in the shape of the Nobel Prize, though its acquaintance with only a fragment of his writings was through English translation in which much of the music and beauty of the original were lost.

The present writer who was privileged to be present that evening as a student of the National College can never forget the great man and the prophet who saw the future greatness of his illustrious countrymen with a clear vision given only to those who have truly lived a life of the ancient Rishis.

গুরুদাস-স্মৃতি

শ্রীকিবণচন্দ্র দত্ত

পূজাপাদ স্বর্গত স্যাব গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ের জন্মশতবার্ষিকী উপলক্ষে তাঁহার জীবনকথা দুইএকটি সংক্ষিপ্ত বিবরণ লিপিবদ্ধ কবিয়া আশা করি নিবেদন করিতেছি।

১৯০১ সালের আদমশুমারী বিবরণ যখন সংগৃহীত হইতেছিল—তখন জানা যায় যে সেন্সাস অফিসার বিজলি সাহেব সর্বপ্রধান কর্তৃকর্তা, তাঁহার সহকর্মীগণ পারস্পর্য্য-হিসাবে স্থান নির্দেশ কবিয়া যেভাবে Census এ বঙ্গব্রজাতিসমূহের তালিকা খসড়া প্রস্তুত কবিয়াছিলেন উহাতে দেখা যায় ব্রাহ্মণ জাতির পরে আরও অন্য পাঁচটি জাতির উল্লেখ কবিয়া কায়স্থ জাতিকে সপ্তম স্থানে স্থান দেওয়া হইয়াছে। উদাহরণস্বরূপে ধর্মিকর ভূদেবসন্তান গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় ইহাতে ক্ষুব্ধ হন এবং উহা অন্যায় বিবেচনা করেন। তাই তিনি কলিকাতার সম্রাট কায়স্থকুলপ্রদীপগণের মধ্যে শ্রীবর্মানাথ ঘোষ, শ্রীভূপেন্দ্রনাথ বসু, শ্রীকালীনাথ মিত্র, বায় নন্দলাল বসু, শ্রীনগেন্দ্রনাথ বসু (পরে বিশ্বকোষ-সঙ্কলনকর্তা) প্রভৃতিকে আহ্বান কবিয়া পরামর্শ করেন এবং তাঁহাদের বলেন, 'বাজমুখে ধর্ম মানি, এই ব্যবস্থায় আগামী Census তালিকায় যদি আপনাদের কায়স্থ জাতিকে এইরূপ ভাবে জাতির নিম্নস্তরে নামাইয়া দেওয়া হয়, তাহা হইলে আপনাদের সামাজিক স্থান অবনমিত হইয়া ক্ষুণ্ণ হইবে। দেশের লোকে ঐ বাজব্যবস্থাই চরম ব্যবস্থা মনে করিবে। অতএব অচিরে আপনাদের সমবেত হইয়া বঙ্গের সকল শ্রেণীর কায়স্থদিগকে এক বিরাট সভায় একত্র সম্মিলিত করুন এবং সমাজবর্ষণ ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিত মহোদয়গণকে সাদরে আহ্বান কবিয়া আপনাদের জাতির স্থান নির্দেশ কবিয়া লউন এবং পূর্বোক্ত ব্যবস্থার প্রতিবাদ-স্বরূপ উহা বাজসকাশে নিবেদন করুন'।

গুরুদাসবাবুর এই পরামর্শ ও উপদেশে ১৯০৮ সালের গ্রাবণ মাসে শ্রীযুক্ত বর্মানাথ ঘোষ মহাশয়ের পাথুরিয়াঘাটস্থ ভবনে বঙ্গের চারিশ্রেণীর কায়স্থের প্রায় দশ হাজার লোক একত্র হইয়া এক বিরাট সভা করেন। বঙ্গের তৎকালীন ব্রাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিতগণের মধ্যে প্রধান প্রধান প্রায় পঞ্চাশ ঘাট্জিন স্বাক্ষর

কবিতা যে চাৰিটি ব্যবস্থা দেন উহাৰ প্ৰথম ও প্ৰধান ব্যবস্থায় কায়স্থ জাতি কৃত্ৰিম-বংশে সম্ভূত বলিয়া নিৰ্দ্ধাৰিত হয় এবং উহাই প্ৰতিবাদৰূপে বাজসকাশে প্ৰেৰিত হয়। ঐ বিৰাট সভা হইতেই বঙ্গদেশীয় কায়স্থ সভাৰ জন্ম ও প্ৰতিষ্ঠা এবং প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে পূজ্যপাদ গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ই এই জাতীয় সভাৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠাতা।

এই প্ৰসঙ্গে তিনি ইহাও জানান যে, ‘ বাজসকাৰ ’ কায়স্থ জাতিৰ স্থান কোথায় তৎকালীন Town Council এৰ সে বিষয়ে মতামত চাওঁয়াৰ কাউন্সিলেৰ সন্মোদনৰূপে স্থিৰ কৰিয়াছে যে উত্তৰে তাঁহাৰা বলিবেন—The Kayasthas of Bengal occupy the next position after the Brahmms in Society. আৰও বলেন যে, যদি সবকাৰ কায়স্থেৰ বৰ্ণ-নিৰ্ণয়-সম্বন্ধে আমাদেৰ মত চাহেন তাহা হইলে আমবা জানাইব যে বঙ্গেশ্বৰ শ্ৰেষ্ঠতম অন্ততঃ পঁচ-জন ব্ৰাহ্মণ-পণ্ডিতকে ছয় মাসেৰ মত বৃত্তি দিয়া তাঁহাদিগকে প্ৰবন্ধ ও নিবন্ধকাৰদিগেৰ মতামত সংগ্ৰহ-পূৰ্ব্বক কায়স্থেৰ বৰ্ণনিৰ্ণয় কৰিবাৰ মতব্য দিতে অনুৰোধ কৰা হউক।

আমাৰ যতদূৰ স্মৰণ আছে এইকপ ইতিবৃত্তই শোনা গিয়াছিল।

সয়াৰ গুৰুদাসেৰ অন্যান্য স্মৃতি-সম্বন্ধে আৰু মাত্ৰ দু’একটি কথা নিম্নে লিপিবদ্ধ কৰিলাম :—

(১) “ জীৱন পৰীক্ষা ও ভীষণ স্বপ্ন চতুৰ্থ ” প্ৰভৃতি অমূল্য-গ্ৰন্থ-প্ৰণেতা মহাত্মা শ্ৰিয়নাথ চক্ৰবৰ্ত্তীৰ স্মৃতি-সভায় শ্যামবাজাৰস্থ মোহনলাল মিত্ৰ মহাশয়েৰ ঠাকুৰবাড়ীতে পূজনীয় বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়কে সভাপতিৰ আসন অলঙ্কৃত কৰিতে অনুৰোধ কৰিলে তিনি দণ্ডায়মান হইয়া দেখেন যে অতি নিকটে তাঁহাৰ গুৰুপুত্ৰ, বাগবাজাৰস্থ গুৰুচৰণ শিবোমণি মহাশয়েৰ কনিষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ পণ্ডিত ক্ষীৰোদ প্ৰসাদ বিদ্যাবিনোদ সমাসীন বহিয়াছে। তাই তিনি বলিয়া উঠেন যে গুৰুদেবেৰ পুত্ৰেৰ উপস্থিতিতে আৰু এই সভায় সভাপতিৰ আসন গ্ৰহণ কৰিতে পাৰিব না। শেষে সকলেৰ বিশেষ অনুৰোধে বিশেষতঃ ক্ষীৰোদবাবু নিজে অত্যন্ত আগ্ৰহ প্ৰকাশ কৰিয়া তাঁহাকে অনুৰোধ কৰিলে তৰে তিনি সভাপতিৰ আসন পৰিগ্ৰহ কৰেন। ঘটনাটি সাৰ্গান্য হইলেও গুৰুদাসেৰ মহত্বেৰ পৰিচায়ক।

(২) বাগবাজাৰ পল্লীতে হাইকোর্ট জেজেৰ নিজস্ব ভৱন আছে কিনা সন্ধান লইয়া জানা যায় যে, বামকান্ত বসু ষ্টীটস্থ বায় বাহাদুৰ অভয়চৰণ মল্লিক মহাশয়েৰ মধ্যমপুত্ৰ অপূৰ্বচৰণ মল্লিকেৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ বসন্তকুমাৰ মল্লিক কলিকাতা হাইকোর্টেৰ বিচাৰপতি ও পাটনা হাইকোর্টেৰ অস্থায়ী প্ৰধান বিচাৰপতি অভয়চৰণ মল্লিকেৰ বাড়ীতেই জন্মগ্ৰহণ কৰেন। সে বহু পূৰ্বেৰ কথা। কিন্তু পনে পূজনীয় গুৰুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ই বাগবাজাৰস্থ অনুপূৰ্ণা ঘাটেৰ উত্তৰে নিজ পৰমাবাধ্যাত্মাত্মদেবীৰ গঙ্গাতটবাসেৰ জন্য এক বাটী নিৰ্মাণ কৰেন এবং গঙ্গাস্নানেৰ জন্য বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় মধ্যো মৰ্যে এই বাড়ীতে সপৰিবাৰে যাতায়াত কৰিতেন এবং এই বাটী হইতেই তিনি নিজেই তাঁহাৰ মাতৃদেবীকে চৰম অবস্থায় গঙ্গাতীৰে লইয়া গিয়া শেষ কৃত্য সম্পাদন কৰেন। বহু পৰে বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় স্বয়ং অন্তিমকাল নিকট বুৰিয়া সজ্জানে এই বাটীতে জীৱনেৰ শেষ কয়দিন বাস কৰেন ও তীব্ৰ হন।

আমবা তাঁহাৰ সংবাদ লইতে যাইতাম এবং শুনিতাম যে তিনি তাঁহাৰ গুৰুদেবেৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ শ্ৰীযুক্ত আশুতোষ ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য মহাশয়েৰ সহিত প্ৰতি সন্ধ্যায় পৰ শ্ৰীগীতাৰ তত্ত্বকথা আলোচনা কৰিতেছেন। এবং ইহাও শুনিয়াছিলাম যে, তাঁহাৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ পুত্ৰ পূজনীয় শ্ৰীযুক্ত হাবাণচন্দ্ৰ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয় সেই মাসেৰ শেষে পেন্সন ফৰ্গ স্বাক্ষৰ কৰাইবাৰ জন্য উপস্থিত হইলে তিনি কল্পিত হস্তে নাম স্বাক্ষৰ কৰেন এবং বলেন, ‘ হাবাণ, এই আমাৰ শেষ স্বাক্ষৰ—আৰু আমি পেন্সন ফৰ্গ সহি কৰিব না। ’

ইহাও শুনা গিয়াছিল ও দেখা গিয়াছিল যে তিনি প্ৰতি বৰিবাৰে নাৰিকেলডাঙ্গা ভৱন হইতে

গঙ্গাস্নানের জন্য এই ভবনে আসিবাব সময়ে বহু দূরে গাড়ী বাধিয়া ‘মধু’ নামক চাকরের সহিত পদ-ব্রাজে গঙ্গাতীরস্থ এই বাড়ীতে উপস্থিত হইতেন। গাড়ী কবিতা তীর্থস্থানে যাইতে নাই—ইহাই তাঁহার বাবণা ছিল। আরও শুনিয়াছিলাম, কিছু দূর হইতে জুতা ও ছাতা তিনি সহচর মধু চাকরের হাতে দিয়া চলিয়া আসিতেন।

বহু সভা-সমিতিতে তাঁহার সভাপতিত্ব কবিতা দেখিয়াছি, এবং তাঁহার স্মৃতিস্তম্ভ উপদেশপূর্ণ অভিভাষণ শুনিয়াছি। তন্মধ্যে বাগবাজার বিডিং লাইব্রেরীর বার্ষিক অধিবেশনে সভাপতির আসন অলঙ্কৃত করার স্মৃতি স্বতঃই প্রথমে মনে উদিত হয়। কলিকাতা ইউনিভার্সিটি ইন্সটিটিউটে ১৮৯৮ সালের বিভিন্ন কলেজের ছাত্রগণের মধ্যে বাদলা ভাষার যে প্রতিযোগিতা হয় তাহাতে পরীক্ষক বা বিচারকগণের মধ্যে তিনিই অগ্রণী। তাঁহার সহিত দ্বিজেন্দ্রনাথ ঠাকুর, হীবেন্দ্রনাথ দত্ত ও বামেন্দ্রচন্দ্র ত্রিবেদী বিচারকরূপে যুক্ত ছিলেন। আমি সে বৎসর প্রেসিডেন্সি কলেজ হইতে ঐ আবৃত্তি-প্রতিযোগিতায় যোগদান কবিয়াছিলাম এবং বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়ের প্রদত্ত পুরস্কারটি প্রাপ্ত হইবার অধিকারী হইয়াছিলাম। ইহা আমার পক্ষে সম্বলীয় ঘটনা ও সৌভাগ্যের কথা।

পরে বঙ্গীয় সাহিত্য-পরিষৎ সম্পর্কে বহু বর্ষ বিবিতা তাঁহার সাহচর্য্য কবিতা অন্য হইয়াছিলাম।

তাঁহারই প্রথম ও প্রধান চেষ্টার ফলে আজ বাদলা ভাষা শিক্ষার বাহনরূপে অন্ততঃ কলিকাতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ম্যাট্রিকুলেশন পরীক্ষায় গৃহীত হইয়াছে।

বহু শ্রদ্ধাবান ব্যক্তি অন্যান্য বহু বিষয়ে তাঁহার উদ্দেশ্যে শ্রদ্ধাঞ্জলি দিবেন—তাই আমি অতি সংক্ষেপে উপরোক্ত কয়েকটি পুণ্যস্মৃতির কথা উল্লেখ কবিতা আমার অন্তরের গভীর শ্রদ্ধা ও ভক্তি নিবেদন কবিলাম।

তাঁহার পুণ্য পুত্র আদর্শ অনুসরণ কবিলে বাদলায় মানুষ হইয়া স্বজাতির পরিচয় দিতে পারিবে—ইহাই আমার ধ্রুব বিশ্বাস।

মনীষী স্যার গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়

অধ্যাপক শ্রী সাতকড়ি মুখোপাধ্যায়

বাংলা দেশে বিগত যুগে যে সমস্ত মনীষী ও কর্মীর প্রাদুর্ভাব হইয়াছিল তাঁহাদের অনন্যসাধারণ প্রতিভা ও জ্ঞানের পরিচয় দেখিয়া ভাবতবর্ষের অন্যান্য প্রদেশের সহৃদয় ব্যক্তিগণ বাদলায় জাতির প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা ও বিস্ময়ে মস্তক অবনত কবিয়াছিলেন। এই যুগের অন্যতম শ্রেষ্ঠ ব্যক্তি ছিলেন স্যার গুরুদাস। কর্মক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহারজীবের ব্যবসায়ে কৃতিত্ব লাভ কবিতা পবে যখন তিনি প্রধান ধর্ম-ধিকরণে অধিকরণিকের পদে প্রতিষ্ঠিত হন এবং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রথম ভারতীয় ভাইস-চ্যান্সেলার রূপে বৃত্ত হন, তখন তাঁহার বিপুল কর্মশক্তির পরিচয় পাইয়া দেশবাসী অনুবক্ত হৃদয়ে তাঁহার লোকোত্তর মনীষার প্রতি ভক্তির অর্থ্য দান কবিয়াছিল। তাঁহার যাহা কর্তব্য ছিল তাহা পবে বাংলায় অপূর্ণ বরপুত্র স্যার আশুতোষ মুখোপাধ্যায় বাস্তবে পরিণত কবিয়াছিলেন। এ মহা গৌরবের যুগ বাদলায় বিস্মৃত হইতে পারে না—এবং যদি বিস্মৃত হয় তবে তাহার ভবিষ্যতের উপজীব্য লুপ্ত হইবে।

স্যাব গুরুদাস কৰ্মক্ষেত্রে অসামান্য সান্নিধ্য প্রমাণ দিয়া অর্থ, সম্মান ও মশ অন্তৰ্জন বনিয়াছিলেন। কিন্তু তাঁহার বৈশিষ্ট্য এই স্থানেই পর্য্যবসিত হয় নাই। তাঁহান ব্যক্তিগত যে অপর একটা নড দিব্ ছিল এবং আমাৰ মনে হয়—ভবিষ্যৎ কালে যাহা তাঁহানৰ স্মৃতি বনিয়া নাথিবে—তাহা হইতেছে তাঁহাৰ মনীষা, সুক্ষ্ম দৃষ্টি, তীক্ষ্ণ বিচাৰশক্তি তনুহীন গভীৰ পাণ্ডিত্য এবং চিন্তাৰ স্বতন্ত্রতা। এই সমস্ত দুৰ্লভ গুণবাজিৰ অবিসংবাদী সাক্ষ্য মিলে তাঁহান বৰ্চিত গ্রন্থসমূহের নানা। তাঁহান গ্রন্থসমূহ আলোচনাৰ ও তাহাৰ তত্ত্বাবধানৰে যে সময় ও সাধনা আনশ্যত তাহা নিমোগ বনিবান সৌভাগ্য বৰ্ত্তমান প্রবন্ধ-লেখকেন ঘটিয়া উঠে নাই। এই প্রবন্ধে সান্নিধ্যভাৱে মাত্ৰ দৃষ্টিদৰ্শন বনিবান চেষ্টা বনা হইবে।

স্যাব গুরুদাসৰ মনীষান বীতিশুদ্ধ ‘জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম’ বাঁহাৰা প্রাচ্য ও পাশ্চাত্য দৰ্শনশাস্ত্ৰন নিগূঢ় পৰিচয় জানেন তাঁহান। এই গ্রন্থ পাঠ কৰিলে গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ গভীৰ দার্শনিক চিন্তাৰ ও দুৰ্গমসানী পাণ্ডিত্যেৰ দৰ্শন পাইবন। বাংলাদেশেৰ বৰ্ত্তমান সাবস্বত অবনতিৰ নিদৰ্শন এই স্থানে যে, বাঁহাৰা কৰ্মক্ষেত্রে ধন ও পদগৌৰবেৰ প্রতিপত্তিতে মন্থীযান্ হইতেছেন তাঁহান। এজাতীয় সাবস্বত সাধনাৰ পৰাওঁমুখ এবং সেজন্য এক্ষেত্রে বাঁহাৰা দীৰ্ঘদিন পনিশ্ৰম কৰিয়া কৃতিত্ব লাভ বনিতোছেন তাঁহাদেৰ সাধনাৰ গুরুত্ব দেশবাসীৰ নিকট উপযুক্ত সন্মাদন ও প্রোৎসাহনা পাইতেছে না। পূৰ্ব যুগে স্যাব গুরুদাস, স্যাব আশুতোষ প্রমুখ মনীষীৰ প্রোৎসাহনাৰ বাংলাৰ মনীষা-অভিব্যক্তিৰ মাৰ্গে প্রসানিত হইয়াছিল। বাঙ্গালী সাবস্বত সাধনাৰ ভাবতবৰ্ষে অগ্র্য আসন অধিৰান কৰিয়া আসিতেছিল প্রায় তিন শতাব্দী যাবৎ। যদি এ ক্ষেত্রে বাঙ্গালী জাতি তাহাৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য বক্ষা কৰিতে সন্মাদন বা শিথিল-প্রযত্ন হয়, তবে ভাবতীয়দেৰ মাৰ্য্য তাহাৰ গৌৰব নষ্ট হইবে। বাঁহাৰা বাঙ্গালী জাতিৰ গৌৰব-বৰিবে ওঁদাস্য ও শ্ৰমবিমুখতা-ৰূপ বাহৰ কবল হইতে নিৰ্মুক্ত বাখিতে চান, তাঁহাদেৰ এ বিষয়ে দৃষ্টি আবৰ্ধণ কৰি। বাণিজ্য-ক্ষেত্রে আমাদেৰ প্রতিষ্ঠা লাভ কৰাৰ সম্ভাবনা এখনও দুৰ্বৰতী। এবদিন বাষ্ট্ৰনীতিতে বাঙ্গালী জাতি ভাবতবৰ্ষেৰ সৰ্বজনসন্মাদত নেতৃত্বপদে অধিষ্ঠিত ছিল, যে বাৰণেই হউক বাঙ্গালী জাতি আজ সেই উচ্চাসন হইতে অপসৃত হইয়াছে। বাঙ্গালী জাতিৰ সৰ্বাপেক্ষা প্রয়োজন হইতেছে যতদূৰ সম্ভব পৰমুখাপেক্ষিতা-বৰ্জন। কিন্তু একথা বিস্মৃত হইলে জাতিৰ অবল্যগ ছাড়া কল্যাণ হইবে না—যেন অন্য ক্ষেত্রে প্রতিষ্ঠা অৰ্জনেৰ প্রলোভনে আমবা নিজেদেৰ স্বদৃঢ় প্রতিষ্ঠিত গৌৰবেৰ ক্ষেত্রে দুৰ্বল হইয়া না পডি। আজ বৈজ্ঞানিক গবেষণায় বাঙ্গালী জাতিৰ পূৰ্বাধিকৃত গৌৰব স্তান হইয়াছে—ইহা অস্বীকাৰ কৰিলে সত্যেৰ অপলাপ কৰা হইবে। দার্শনিক চিন্তায় ধুনোপে জাৰ্মান জাতিৰ ন্যায় বাঙ্গালী একদিন ভাবতবৰ্ষে অগ্রাসনে প্রতিষ্ঠিত ছিল, যদি ইহাও আমাদেৰ হস্তচ্যুত হয়—অনুতাপ কৰিয়াও কোন ফল হইবে না।

স্যাব গুরুদাস তাঁহাৰ স্বতন্ত্র চিন্তাশক্তিৰ যে প্রমাণ অঙ্কিত বাখিয়াছেন তাঁহাৰ ‘জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম’ নামক গ্রন্থে—তাঁহাৰ পুনবালোচনাৰ জন্য আমি দৰ্শনেৰ অধ্যাপক ও অধ্যাত্ববৃন্দকে সাগ্রহ আমন্ত্রণ কৰিতেছি। যদি প্রতিবন্ধকতা থাকে—তবে অন্ততঃ বাঙ্গালী সাহিত্যেৰ পোষ্ট-গ্ৰাজুয়েট বিভাগে ইহা পাঠ্য-পুস্তকৰূপে অধ্যয়ন ও অধ্যাপনাৰ বিষয় হইলে বাংলা সাহিত্যেৰ অধ্যাত্ববৃন্দেৰ চিন্তাৰ জডতা দূৰীকৃত হইবে এবং বুদ্ধি সজীবতা লাভ কৰিবে। আমাৰ নিকট ইহা দুৰ্বোধ্য যে আমবা কেন অধ্যাপক বামেদ্রস্বন্দৰ ত্ৰিবেদী ও স্যাব গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়েৰ গ্রন্থসমূহকে অপাংজ্জেষ কৰিয়া বাখিয়াছি।

এখন ‘জ্ঞান ও কৰ্ম’ গ্রন্থেৰ প্রতিপাদ্য বস্তুৰ আলোচনাৰ প্রবৃত্ত হইব। গ্রন্থেৰ নামকৰণেৰ স্বৰূপ হইতে বুঝিতে পাৰা যায় যে ইহাৰ প্রতিপাদ্য বিষয় দুই শ্ৰেণীতে বিভক্ত। প্রথম জ্ঞান-কাণ্ডে জ্ঞান-প্রক্রিয়া ও প্রমাণ-শাস্ত্ৰেৰ বিষয় জ্ঞেয়েৰ স্বৰূপ। জ্ঞানেৰ উপায় ও সীমা প্রভৃতি বিষয়ে পাশ্চাত্য

এ প্রাচ্য দার্শনিকদিগের মতের পরীক্ষা কবিতা গ্রন্থকার স্বীয় মত অভিব্যক্ত কবিয়াছেন। ইহা পাশ্চাত্য দর্শনে Epistemology এবং প্রাচ্য দর্শনে প্রমাণ-কাণ্ড বলিয়া অভিহিত হইয়াছে। গ্রন্থকারের পাণ্ডিত্য, অন্তর্দৃষ্টি, সাবাসাব বিবেচনা প্রতি পাত্রেই উপলব্ধ হইয়া থাকে। পাশ্চাত্য দার্শনিক ক্যান্টের মত আলোচনা-প্রসঙ্গে গ্রন্থকার যে উক্তি কবিয়াছেন তাহা তাঁহার সূক্ষ্ম চিন্তাব প্রমাণ-স্বরূপ উপস্থিত কবিতোক্তি। ক্যান্টের মতে দেশ ও কাল “জ্ঞাতাব জ্ঞানের নিয়ম এবং পদার্থে আবোপিত।” ইহারা জ্ঞেয় পদার্থ নহে। “যাঁহাদের মতে দেশ ও কাল জ্ঞেয় পদার্থ নহে, কেবল জ্ঞাতাব নিয়ম মাত্র, তাঁহারা স্বমত-সমর্থনার্থে এইকপ তর্ক করেন—দেশ ও কাল জ্ঞানের বাহিবে থাকিতে পারে না, কেননা তাহা হইলে বহির্জগতের পদার্থের জ্ঞান হইতে দেশ ও কালের জ্ঞান ক্রমশ উদ্ভাবিত হইত, কিন্তু তাহা না হইয়া প্রথম হইতেই বহির্জগতের কোন বিষয়ই আমবা দেশ-কাল-অনবচ্ছিন্ন বলিয়া মনে কবিতো পাবি না। অতএব দেশ-কালের জ্ঞান বাহিবে হইতে প্রাপ্ত নহে, অস্তব হইতে উদ্ভূত। এ তর্ক সঙ্গত বটে। কিন্তু ইহা দ্বারা একথা সপ্রমাণ হয় না যে দেশ-কাল জ্ঞেয় পদার্থ নহে, কেবল জ্ঞাতাব জ্ঞানের নিয়ম, এবং আমাদের ন্যায় জ্ঞাতা না থাকিলে দেশ-কাল থাকিত না। বরং দেশ-কাল-অনবচ্ছিন্ন বিষয় আমবা চিত্তা কবিতো পাবি না, ইহা দ্বারা এই কথা সপ্রমাণ হয় যে দেশ-কাল স্বতঃসিদ্ধ জ্ঞেয়, এবং অপনাপন জ্ঞেয় পদার্থ অপেক্ষা ইহাদের অস্তিত্ব অধিকতর নিশ্চিত। যে দেশ ও কাল-অনবচ্ছিন্ন কোন বিষয় আছে ইহা মনে করা যায় না, এবং যাহার অভাব মনেও তাবা যায় না, সেই দেশ ও কাল জ্ঞাতাব বাহিবে নাই এবং জ্ঞাতা-কর্তৃক জ্ঞেয় পদার্থে আবোপিত হয়, একথা বলিতে গেলে, জ্ঞাতাব অর্থাৎ আত্মার সাক্ষ্য বাক্যের সত্যতা সন্দেহ কবিতো হয়, এবং তাহা কবিতো হইলে সেই সন্দেহের প্রতিও সন্দেহ হয়।” ৩৪-৩৫ পৃঃ। উদ্ধৃত বাক্যটি দীর্ঘ হইল। কিন্তু তাঁহার যুক্তির সংক্ষেপে প্রতিপাদন কবিতো এই জটিল বিষয়ের যে প্রাঞ্জল ব্যাখ্যা ও ততোধিক প্রাঞ্জল তাহার খণ্ডন করা হইয়াছে, তাহাকে বড়ই জটিল করা হইত। যাঁহারা পেশাদার দার্শনিক বা দর্শনশাস্ত্রের অধ্যাপক, তাঁহাদের পক্ষেও এ বিষয়টি এত সহজে নিকপণ করা দুষ্কর—ইহাতে সন্দেহ নাই।

‘অন্তর্জগৎ’ অধ্যায়ে গ্রন্থকার মানব-বুদ্ধিবৃত্তির যে বিশ্লেষণ কবিয়াছেন তাহা বঙ্গভাষায় অপূর্ব বলিয়াই মনে কবি। বিশেষ কবিতা তাঁহার পরিভাষা এত স্পষ্ট ও প্রসাদগুণ-বিশিষ্ট যে তাহাতে বিস্ময় বোধ না কবিতা পাবা যায় না। বাঙ্গালা-ভাষায় এ জাতীয় দার্শনিক গ্রন্থ বেশী আছে বলিয়া জানি না। এত সরল, সরস ও সাবলীল ভাবে অতি দুষ্কর দার্শনিক বিষয়ের আলোচনা করা বৃত্তিভেদে বিম্বর। তাঁহার এই গ্রন্থ দ্বারা বাঙ্গালা-সাহিত্য সমৃদ্ধ হইয়াছে ইহা বলা মোটেই অতিশয়োক্তি নহে। তবে ইহার উদ্দেশ্য—বঙ্গভাষাভাষী ব্যক্তিগণ পাশ্চাত্য ও প্রাচ্য দর্শনের মূল গ্রন্থ পাঠ না কবিতাও তাহাদের বিচার্য ও প্রতিপাদ্য বস্তুর সহিত নিবিড় পরিচয় স্থাপন কবিতো সমর্থ হইবেন। সে উদ্দেশ্য যদি সাধিত না হইয়া থাকে তবে তাহা গ্রন্থকারের লেখনৈশলী, ভাষার জড়তা বা যুক্তির জটিলতাবশতঃ হইয়াছে ইহা মনে কবিলে অপবাধ হইবে। এই উদ্দেশ্য বিফল হইলে প্রমাণিত হইবে যে বর্তমান বাঙালী কঠোর চিন্তাব সহিত পরিচয় স্থাপন কবিতো পবাঙ্গুখ।

‘বহির্জগৎ’ অধ্যায়ে গ্রন্থকার দ্বৈতবাদ, জড়দ্বৈতবাদ, জড়চৈতন্যবাদ ও চৈতন্যদ্বৈতবাদ সম্বন্ধে যে আলোচনা কবিয়াছেন তাহা তাঁহার বিষয়বোধ ও বিচারবুদ্ধির পরিচয় দিতেছে ইহা মাত্র নহে, তাঁহার আলোচনায় এই সমস্ত জটিল মতবাদের আভ্যন্তর বহস্য উদ্ঘাটিত হইয়াছে। দর্শনের অব্যেতৃগণ যদি ইহার আলোচনা করেন, তবে তাঁহারা লাভবান হইবেন।

‘বহির্জগৎ’ নামক অধ্যায়ের উপসংহারে জগতে শুভ ও অশুভের সম্ভাব নিকপণ কবিতা গ্রন্থকার যুক্তি ও শাস্ত্র-প্রমাণ-সহকায়ে যে সিদ্ধান্তে উপনীত হইয়াছেন তাহা তাঁহার অপক্ষপাত বিচার-

শক্তি পৰিচায়ক। জগতের শুভাশুভের আপেক্ষিক পৰিমাণ নিকৰ্পণ কৰা অসাধ্য ইহা বলিয়া গ্রন্থকাৰ বলিলেন যে আন্তৰ ও বাহ্য জগতে অশুভের সম্ভাব অস্বীকাৰ কৰা যায় না গত, তথাপি শুভের প্রতি মানুষের ব্যাবুলতা ও আকাঙ্ক্ষা প্রমাণ কৰিতেছে যে জগতে শুভের প্রাধান্যই প্রতিষ্ঠিত হইক ইহা আগবা কামনা কৰি। অশুভ প্রবৃত্তিৰ মূলেও আত্যন্তিক শুভবুদ্ধিৰ প্রতি শ্রদ্ধাই নিহিত বহিয়াছে। “এমন কি চোৰও তাহাৰ চৌৰ্য্যলব্ধ দ্রব্য অন্য কেহ অপহৰণ বন্ধিবে না এ বিশ্বাস নাথ, যোৰ নৃশংস দুৰ্দ্ধৰ্মীও বৃত্ত হইলে অন্যেৰ দয়াৰ উপৰ নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিয়া কমা পাইবান আশা কৰে। . . শুভের নিমিত্ত আমাদেৰ অন্তৰ্নিহিত এই অপ্রতিহত অনুৰাগ কোথা হইতে জন্ম ? জগতের আদি কাৰণ মঙ্গলময় না হইলে মঙ্গলেৰ দিকে আমাদেৰ আত্মাৰ অপ্রতিহত গতি কখনই হইত না। অতএব ঈশ্বৰ যে মঙ্গলময় তাহাতে সন্দেহ থাকিতে পাৰে না, এবং তাহা হইলে ইহ জীবনের অশুভ অনন্ত জীবনের শুভের নিমিত্ত এ অনুমান অমূলক না হইয়া বৰং সম্পূৰ্ণ যুক্তিসিদ্ধ বলিয়া প্রতিপন্ন হইতেছে।” (১১৪ পৃঃ)।

গ্রন্থকাৰ আশাবাদী—তিনি জীবের শুভ পৰিণামে বিশ্বাস কৰেন। তিনি বিশ্বাস কৰেন যে জগতের দুৰ্ভেদ্য বহস্য একদিন জীবের নিকট উদ্ঘাটিত হইবে। কিন্তু এই বিশ্বাস অন্ধপ্রবৃত্তি-মূলক নহে কিংবা মানবীয় জ্ঞানের অপূৰ্ণতা-বিষয়ে বিচাৰেৰ অভাবপ্রযুক্তও নহে। বৈজ্ঞানিক গবেষণাৰ দ্বাৰা আমাদেৰ নিকটে পূৰ্বে যাহা অজ্ঞাত ছিল বৰ্ত্তমানে তাহা জ্ঞাত হইয়াছে এবং জ্ঞানের সীমা বৰ্ধিত হইতেছে। “তবে জ্ঞানলাভেৰ আকাঙ্ক্ষা তাহাতে পূৰ্ণ হয় না, স্মৃতবাং মনুষ্য কোন বিষয়েৰ স্বৰূপ ও কাৰণ জানিবাৰ চেষ্টায় বিবত হইতে পাৰে না, এবং দৰ্শনশাস্ত্ৰেৰ চৰ্চাও বৈজ্ঞানিকেৰ বিজ্ঞাপে বিলুপ্ত হইতে পাৰে না।” (১২৩ পৃঃ)।

“জ্ঞানলাভেৰ উপায়” ও “জ্ঞানলাভেৰ উদ্দেশ্য” এই দুইটি অধ্যায় শিক্ষাব্রতী ও সাধাৰণ শিক্ষিত ব্যক্তিগণেৰ অবশ্যপাঠ্য ও আলোচনীয়। গ্রন্থকাৰ জ্যেষ্ঠ বিষয়সমূহেৰ অবিভক্ত আলোচনা কৰিয়া প্রত্যেক আলোচ্য বিষয়েৰ উপৰ যে অভিমত ব্যক্ত কৰিয়াছেন, তাহা জিজ্ঞাস্মাত্ৰেৰই বিচাৰ্য্য। কেবল জ্ঞাতব্য শাস্ত্রসমূহেৰ আলোচনা কৰিয়াই তিনি ক্ষান্ত হন নাই—তাহাৰ উপায়-স্বৰূপ শাৰীৰিক ও বাহ্য উপকৰণ-সম্বন্ধে যে সিদ্ধান্ত নিৰ্ণয় কৰিয়াছেন, তাহাৰ যথার্থতা ও উপকাৰিতা সৰ্ববাদিসম্মত হইলেও বাস্তব জীবনে তাহাৰ কাৰ্যকাৰিতা-বিষয়ে যে উদ্যম ও প্রচেষ্টা আবশ্যিক তাহা এখনও অনুষ্ঠিত হয় নাই। এ বিষয়ে আমি শিক্ষাব্রতীদিগেৰ সশ্রদ্ধ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিতেছি। জাতীয় শিক্ষা-সম্বন্ধে গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ মত বিশেষ প্ৰণিধানযোগ্য। পাঠ্যপুস্তক-সম্বন্ধে গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ উপদেশগুলিৰ সমীচীনতাৰ প্রতি বোধ হয় কম লোকই সন্দিহান হইবেন। কিন্তু কাৰ্য্যত আগবা ইহাৰ বিপৰীত আচৰণ কৰিয়া আসিতেছি। এ বিষয়ে গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ কতকগুলি উপদেশ আগবা উদ্ধৃত কৰিতেছি —

“সকল পুস্তকই যথাসম্ভব স্বল্পায়তন হওয়া উচিত। সকল পাঠকেবই সময়, এবং অধিকাংশ পাঠকেবই অর্থসম্ভতি সক্ষীৰ্ণ, স্মৃতবাং বৃহদাকাৰ গ্রন্থ সংগ্রহ কৰা ও পাঠ কৰা প্রায় সকলেবই পক্ষে অস্ববিধাজনক। তবে যে প্রয়োজনাতীত বৃহদাকাৰ গ্রন্থ কেন প্রণীত হয় তাহাৰও কাৰণ আছে। প্রথমতঃ প্রয়োজনীয় সকল কথা বিশদভাবে অথচ সংক্ষেপে বলা বহু আয়াস-সাধ্য, স্মৃতবাং গ্রন্থেৰ কলেবৰ-বৃদ্ধি সহজেই হইয়া পড়ে। দ্বিতীয়তঃ আগবা এত বৃথাভিমানী যে, না ভানিয়াও অনেক সময়ে বড় জিনিষেৰ আদৰ কৰি, স্মৃতবাং বড় পুস্তক, কি গ্রন্থকাৰ কি পাঠক সকলেবই নিকট সহজেই সমাদৃত হয়।” (১৮৮-৮৯ পৃঃ)। বচনাৰ ভাষা ও শ্ৰেণী সৰ্ব্বদা গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ সাৰগৰ্ভ উক্তি ও অনুভবসিদ্ধ সিদ্ধান্তসমূহ-সম্বন্ধে কিছু না বলিলে ক্ৰটি হইবে। গ্রন্থকাৰ বিষয়ভেদে ও গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ কচি ও প্রকৃতিভেদে ভাষাৰ বৈষম্য অনিবাৰ্য্য ও বাঞ্ছনীয় ইহা স্বীকাৰ কৰিয়াও একটি বিষয়ে সাম্য অবশ্য কামনা কৰেন। “সেই সাম্য ভাষাৰ সবলতা ও স্বাভাবিকতা। , ভাষা স্কন্দ হইতে

গেলে তাহা সবল হওয়া আবশ্যিক, কাবণ সবলতা এস্থলে সৌন্দৰ্য্যেৰ মূল আৰ অলঙ্কাৰেৰ আধিন্য সৌন্দৰ্য্যেৰ হ্ৰাস ভিন্ন বৃদ্ধিবাবক নহে। এবং ভাষা হৃদয়গ্ৰাহী হইতে গেলে তাহা স্বাভাবিক হওয়া আবশ্যিক। . . . মানুষে মানুষে যতই প্রকৃতিভেদ ও কচিভেদ থাকুক না কেন, সে সমস্তই একপ্রকাৰ বাহিৰেৰ ভেদ, এবং সে সমস্ত বৈষম্যেৰ মধ্যে অন্তৰে সকল মনুষ্যেই একপ্রকাৰ সাম্য আছে। আমাদেৰ অন্তৰ্নিহিত গভীৰ ভাবগুলি সেই সাম্যে সংস্থাপিত। . . . অতএব যে ভাষা মনুষ্যেৰ সেই অন্তৰ্নিহিত গভীৰ ভাবেৰ স্ফুৰণ, তাহা মনুষ্যগাত্ৰেবই হৃদয় স্পৰ্শ কৰে। সেই ভাষাই প্রকৃত মন্ত্ৰ। তাহাই মনুষ্যকে মন্ত্ৰমুগ্ধ কৰে। সেই ভাষায় অধিকাৰ প্ৰতিভাবেই জন্মে। . . . যাহাৰ সেই মন্ত্ৰ-সদৃশ ভাষায় অধিকাৰ না জন্মে তাহাৰ পক্ষে বৃথা আডম্বৰশূন্য সবল ভাষাই অবলম্বনীয় ॥” (১৯১-৯২ পৃঃ)।

বৈজ্ঞানিক ও সাহিত্যিকভেদে দুইপ্রকাৰ বচনাৰ উল্লেখ কৰিয়া গ্ৰন্থকাৰ বলিতেছেন “বৈজ্ঞানিক প্ৰণালীতে বচনা কৰা, একটু যত্ন কৰিলে, সকলেবই পক্ষে সাধ্য। সাহিত্যিক প্ৰণালীতে বচনা কৰাৰ চেষ্টা বিশেষ প্ৰতিভাশালী ব্যক্তি ভিনু অন্যেৰ পক্ষে বৃথা। কিন্তু অভিমানপৰতন্ত্ৰ হইয়া অনোকই সেই বৃথা চেষ্টা কৰেন।” আজ পৰ্য্যন্ত এ উক্তিৰ যথার্থতা অপ্ৰমাণিত হয় নাই, আৰ লেখকগণ এ বিষয়ে অবহিত হইলে শুভ ফলেৰ আশা কৰা যায়। সাহিত্য-সম্বন্ধে গ্ৰন্থকাৰেৰ মত স্বচ্ছ ও স্পষ্ট এবং তাহা সাহিত্যিক-গাত্ৰেবই প্ৰণিধানযোগ্য। “ভাল সাহিত্যগ্ৰন্থ স্কুচি ও স্তম্ভবৃত্তি উত্তেজিত কৰিয়া যে পৰিমাণে সাধাৰণেৰ হিতসাধন কৰিতে পাবে, মন্দ সাহিত্যগ্ৰন্থ কুচি ও কুপ্ৰবৃত্তি উৎসাহিত কৰিয়া কেবল সে পৰিমাণে নহে তদপেক্ষা অধিক পৰিমাণে সাধাৰণেৰ অনিষ্ট কৰিতে পাবে। কাবণ, দুৰ্ভাগ্যবশতঃ উন্নতিৰ পথে অপেক্ষা অবনতিৰ পথে গতি অতি সহজ।”

“জ্ঞানলাভেৰ উদ্দেশ্য” শীৰ্ষক অধ্যায়ে গ্ৰন্থকাৰ মনুষ্যেৰ স্বভাবসিদ্ধ জিজ্ঞাসা-প্ৰবৃত্তি ও তাহাৰ চৰিতার্থ তাৰ আনন্দলাভেৰ উল্লেখ কৰিয়া অপূৰ্ণতা ও অক্ষমতাৰ দূৰীকৰণ ও জ্ঞানেৰ ফল বলিয়াছেন। “সংক্ষেপে বলিতে গেলে সৰ্বপ্রকাৰ দুঃখনিবৃত্তি ও সৰ্বপ্রকাৰ স্তম্ভবৃত্তিই জ্ঞানলাভেৰ উদ্দেশ্য। এবং দুঃখ কি ও স্তম্ভ কি এ প্ৰশ্নেৰ উত্তৰে সংক্ষেপে বলা যাইতে পাবে, অভাব ও অপূৰ্ণতাই দুঃখ আৰ তাহাৰ পূৰণই স্তম্ভ।” জ্ঞানেৰ বৃদ্ধিৰ সঙ্গে সঙ্গে জগতে অশুভ প্ৰবৃত্তিৰ বৃদ্ধিৰ বিষয় আলোচনা কৰিয়া প্ৰবৃত্তিমূলক পাশ্চাত্য শিক্ষা ও সভ্যতাৰ বিষয়ে গ্ৰন্থকাৰ যে সমাধান কৰিয়াছেন, তাহা একদিন হয়তো জগতেৰ শ্ৰেষ্ঠ ব্যক্তিগণ স্বীকাৰ কৰিয়া লইবেন। কিন্তু এই কৰিয়া অস্বাভাবিক ত্যাগশীলতাৰ পক্ষে তিনি ওকালতী কৰেন নাই। “একদিকে মনে বাখিতে হইবে যে আমাদেৰ অপূৰ্ণ অবস্থায় পূৰ্ণ নিঃস্বার্থপৰতা যেমন সম্ভবপৰ নহে, তেনাই শুভ নহে। আমাদেৰ বৰ্তমান দেহাৰচ্ছিন্ন অপূৰ্ণ অবস্থায় কতকগুলি স্বার্থ বিসৰ্জন কৰা অসাধ্য, এবং সেই স্বার্থ-সাধন-নিমিত্ত আমবা নিজে যত্নবান্ না হইলে সমাজ এত উন্নত হয় নাই যে অন্যে তন্নিমিত্ত যত্নবান্ হইবে। পক্ষান্তৰে আমবা নিতান্ত স্বার্থপৰ হইতে গেলে অন্যেৰ স্বার্থেৰ সহিত বিৰোধ উপস্থিত হইয়া নিজ স্বার্থসাধন অসাধ্য হইয়া পড়িবে। কতদূৰ নিজ স্বার্থত্যাগ কৰিলে ও পৰেৰ স্বার্থেৰ প্ৰতি দৃষ্টি বাখিলে সাধ্যমত উচ্চমাত্রায় স্বার্থলাভ হইতে পাবে, প্ৰবৃত্ত নিজ হিতাৰ্থীকে এই সমস্যা নিবত্তৰ পূৰণ কৰিয়া চলিতে হইবে।” (২২২ পৃঃ)। এই প্ৰসঙ্গে হিন্দু-বৰ্ণশাস্ত্ৰেৰ ত্ৰিবৰ্গ-সাধনেৰ কথা মনে পড়। ধৰ্ম, অৰ্থ, কাম এই ত্ৰিবিধ কাম্য বস্তু ত্ৰিবৰ্গ নামে অভিহিত হইবাছে। মনু প্ৰভৃতি মহৰ্ষিগণ ইহাদেৰ পৰস্পৰ অবিৰোধে সেবা কৰিবাৰ জন্য পুনঃপুনঃ উপদেশ দান কৰিতে কুঠা বোধ কৰেন নাই। এই কাৰণেই গৃহীন সৰ্বস্ব-দান অৰ্থ বলিয়াই শাস্ত্ৰকাবগণ নিৰ্দেশ কৰিয়াছেন। পক্ষান্তৰে আবশ্যিক ধৰ্মসংগত ব্যয় না কৰিয়া অৰ্থ-সংঘৰ্ষেৰ ভূয়সী নিদা কৰিয়াছেন। ভোগেৰ প্ৰবৃত্তি স্বাভাবিক। তাহাৰ অনুচিত নিবোধেৰ প্ৰয়াস না কৰিয়া বৰ্ণসম্পত্ত্যৰে এবং আৰ্থিক সম্পত্তিৰ জিনি না কৰিয়া ভোগপ্ৰবৃত্তি চৰিতার্থ কৰিয়া মনুষ্যকে ত্যাগে ও জগতেৰ হিতসাধনে নিবোগ কৰিবাৰ বৌশল নানা যুক্তি ও আখ্যায়িকাৰ

সাজাযো শাস্ত্ৰে প্ৰতিপাদিত হইয়াছে। যখনই সহজে মোক্ষলাভেৰ অনৈসৰ্গিক বাসনাৰ অভিভূত হইয়া সাধাৰণ নবনাৰী বৌদ্ধাদি ধৰ্মানুশাসিত ভিন্দুৰূপে প্ৰবৃত্ত হইয়াছিল—তখন অমঙ্গলেৰ তাণ্ডে গৃহীত সমাজবন্ধন শিথিল হইয়া পড়িয়াছিল। এজন্যই মনে হয় কোটিল্য স্বপ্ৰণীত অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰে বৃদ্ধ মাতা-পিতা শিশুপুত্ৰ ও সাধ্বী ভাৰ্য্যৰ সংসাৰযাত্ৰাৰ ব্যবস্থা না কৰিয়া প্ৰবৃত্ত্যলাভেৰ দণ্ডনীয় কৰিয়াছেন। এ সম্বন্ধে মহাঘি ব্ৰহ্মবিদ্ যাজ্ঞবল্ক্যেৰ উদাহৰণ প্ৰমাণস্বৰূপ উপস্থাপিত ব'না অসম্ভব হইবে না মনে হয়। যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য সন্যাস-গ্ৰহণেৰ পূৰ্বে তাঁহাৰ দুই ভাৰ্য্যৰ মাৰ্য্য তাঁহাৰ ধনসম্পত্তি সমভাবে বিভাগ কৰিয়া দেন। অবশ্য মৈত্ৰেয়ী দেবী উচ্চ ব্ৰহ্মবিদ্যাৰ বিষয় প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰেন। ঐ বুদ্ধি যতদিন সজীৱ ও স্বাভাৱিক থাকে ততদিন এইদৰে একদেশিতাৰ প্ৰশ্ন দেওবা হয় না। মধ্য মধ্য সমাজে এক সঙ্কট-কাল উপস্থিত হয়। তখন এক শ্ৰেণীৰ লোক ধৰ্মেৰ জন্য উন্মত্ত আৰাৰ অন্য শ্ৰেণী ভোগে উচুৰুখল হয়। এই উভয়বিধ এবদেশী প্ৰবৃত্তিৰ দোষ দৰ্শাইয়া শাস্ত্ৰ 'ত্ৰিবৰ্গসাধনে'ৰ বিষয়ে উপদেশ দিয়াছেন। তাহাৰ খাতে পাবলৌকিক নিঃশ্ৰেয়স বা অভ্যুদয়েৰ প্ৰলোভনে ঐহিক অভ্যুদয় উপেক্ষিত হয় নাই। স্যাব গুৰুদাস বৰ্ত্তমান কালে শাস্ত্ৰেৰ এই নিগূহ বহস্য আধুনিক বিজ্ঞান ও দৰ্শনেৰ যুক্তিৰ দ্বাৰা উপস্থাপিত কৰিয়া শিক্ষিত সমাজেৰ নিকট উপস্থাপিত কৰিয়াছেন।

এখন কৰ্ত্তাকাণ্ডেৰ বিষয়ে কিছু আলোচনা কৰিব। 'কৰ্ত্তাৰ স্বতন্ত্ৰতা আছে কি না' এ বিষয়ে গ্ৰন্থকাৰ প্ৰাচীন ও নবীন দাৰ্শনিকদিগেৰ মতেৰ আলোচনা কৰিয়াছেন। যুৰোপীয় নীতিশাস্ত্ৰে ইহা Determinism ও Freedom of the will নামক চিৰন্তন সমস্যা। গ্ৰন্থকাৰ এ বিষয়ে তাঁহাৰ কোন মতে পক্ষপাত আছে তাহা ব্যক্ত কৰেন নাই। কিন্তু কৰ্ত্তাৰ অস্বতন্ত্ৰতাবাদ মানিয়া লইলেও মানুষ নিশ্চেষ্ট হইয়া বাইবে ইহা মনে কৰেন না। "অস্বতন্ত্ৰতাবাদ একথা বলে না যে কৰ্ত্তাৰ চেষ্টাৰ প্ৰয়োজন নাই। অস্বতন্ত্ৰতাবাদ কেবল ইহাই বলে যে কৰ্ত্তাৰ ইচ্ছা স্বাধীন নহে। সে ইচ্ছাই তাহাৰ নিজেৰ কাৰণ নহে, কিন্তু তাহা কৰ্ত্তাৰ পূৰ্ব স্বভাৱ, পূৰ্ব শিক্ষা ও চতুৰ্পাশুৰ্ৰ প্ৰভাৱৰ ফল। সেই পূৰ্ব শিক্ষা ও পূৰ্ব স্বভাৱ ও চতুৰ্পাশুৰ্ৰ প্ৰভাৱ কাৰণ-স্বৰূপ হইয়া তাহাদেৰ কাৰ্য্য অবশ্যই কৰিবে, এবং তাহাৰ ফলে কৰ্ত্তাকে যতটুকু চেষ্টা কৰিতে হইবে ততটুকু চেষ্টা না কৰিয়া তিনি ক্ষান্ত থাকিতে পাৰিবেন না। আৰু এই অস্বতন্ত্ৰতাবাদ যখন কৰ্ত্তা নিজ কৰ্ম্মাৰম্ভেৰ ওভাওভ ফলভোগী বলিয়া মানিতেছে, এবং শুভফল-লাভেৰ ও অশুভফল-পৰিত্যাগেৰ চেষ্টা যখন মনুষ্যেৰ স্বভাৱসিদ্ধ, তখন মানুষ অস্বতন্ত্ৰতাবাদী হইলেই যে নিশ্চেষ্ট হইবে ইহা কখন সম্ভৱপৰ নহে" (২৪০ পৃঃ)। এ বিষয়ে বৰ্ত্তমান প্ৰবন্ধ-লেখক মনে কৰেন যে মানবেৰ মানসিক অবস্থা ও প্ৰবৃত্তি পূৰ্বকৰ্ম্মাধীন এবং চতুৰ্পাশুৰ্ৰ প্ৰভাৱ ও শিক্ষাৰ ফলস্বৰূপ হইলেও তাহাৰ ইচ্ছা ও প্ৰবৃত্তিৰ স্বাভাৱিক অস্বীকাৰ কৰা যায় না। ফললাভেৰ জন্য কাৰ্য্য কৰা যেমন স্বাভাৱিক, ফল ত্যাগ কৰিয়া কৰ্ত্তব্যকৰ্ম্ম কৰাৰ প্ৰবৃত্তিও অসম্ভৱ নহে। মূলতঃ শুভাওভ কৰ্ম্মেৰ জন্য প্ৰবৃত্তি মানবেৰ স্বতন্ত্ৰেচ্ছতা স্বীকাৰ কৰিলে যেকোন সহজে উপপাদন কৰা যায় তাহা বিপৰীত বাদেৰ দ্বাৰা সম্ভৱ হয় না। আৰু প্ৰণিধান কৰিবাব বিষয় এই যে—মনুষ্য যেমন নিজেকে অস্বতন্ত্ৰ বলিয়া বুঝিতে পাৰে তেমনি সে তাহাৰ স্বতন্ত্ৰতা-সম্বন্ধেও দৃঢ়প্ৰত্যয়। ইহা আৰম্ভদিগেৰ মৌলিক অনুভৱসিদ্ধ (ultimate fact) এবং যুক্তিহীন। এই স্বভাৱসিদ্ধ বোধকে প্ৰত্যাখ্যান কৰিলেও তাহাকে প্ৰতিহত ও প্ৰতিকল্প কৰিতে পাৰা যায় না। সমস্ত ধৰ্ম্মশাস্ত্ৰ, নীতিশাস্ত্ৰ, অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰ ও সমাজতত্ত্বশাস্ত্ৰ মানবেৰ মুখ্য উদ্দেশ্য চৰমপূৰ্ণতালাভেৰ বিষয়ে অসন্দিহান এবং সেই পূৰ্ণতাসিদ্ধিৰ জন্য উপায় উদ্ভাৱনে সচেষ্ট। এবং এই উদ্দেশ্য সিদ্ধ হইতে হইলে মানিতে হইবে যে সত্য ও ন্যায়েৰ প্ৰতি মানবেৰ পক্ষপাত স্বাভাৱিক ও স্বেচ্ছাপ্ৰণোদিত। কুশিক্ষা ও কু-অভ্যাসেৰ প্ৰভাৱে মানব আপাতবৰ্ণীয় বিষয়ভোগে অগিলক্ল শলভেৰ ন্যায় পৰবশভাবে

চালিত হইলেও তাহাৰ আত্যন্তিক জয় অবশ্যজ্ঞাবী—তাহাৰ কাৰণ স্বাতন্ত্ৰ্য তাহাৰ স্বভাব এবং পাবতন্ত্ৰ্য পবভাব। আমি যে কথা বলিলাম তাহা গ্ৰন্থকাৰ নানাতাবে তাঁহাৰ গ্ৰন্থে প্ৰতিপাদন কৰিয়া-
ছেন। পাছে চিন্তাতীক পাঠক ভুল বুঝোন এই আশঙ্কায় এত কথা বলিলাম মাত্ৰ।

“কৰ্ত্তব্যতাৰ লক্ষণ”——কৰ্ণকাণ্ডেৰ দ্বিতীয় অব্যায়। এই অধ্যায়ে গ্ৰন্থকাৰেৰ অনন্যসাধারণ বিচাৰশক্তি ও সুক্ষ্মবোধেৰ পৰিচয় পাইয়া সহৃদয় ব্যক্তিমাতেই বিস্মিত হইবেন এবং মুগ্ধ হইবেন। প্ৰবৃত্তিবাদ ও নিবৃত্তিবাদ-ভেদে স্থূলতঃ কৰ্ত্তব্যতাৰ দ্বিবিধ স্বৰূপ-ভেদেৰ আলোচনা কৰিয়া গ্ৰন্থকাৰ নিবৃত্তিবাদেৰ পক্ষেই ভৰ কৰিয়াছেন। কিন্তু মানবেৰ অপূৰ্ণতাৰস্থায় আত্মবন্ধাৰ কৰ্ত্তব্যতা-সম্বন্ধে তিনি যে সিদ্ধান্ত কৰিয়াছেন তাহাও বিচাৰসম্পন্ন বলিয়া গ্ৰহণ কৰিতেই হইবে। এই প্ৰসঙ্গে বিশেষ কৰিয়া গ্ৰন্থকাৰ যে চাৰিটি সঙ্কটময় প্ৰশ্ন উত্থাপন কৰিয়াছেন তাহাৰ সমাধান-বিষয়ে প্ৰচলিত পাশ্চাত্য-নীতিবিদগণেৰ ও প্ৰাচ্যনীতিবিদগণেৰ মত আলোচনা কৰিয়া যে স্থায়ী সিদ্ধান্ত নিৰূপণ কৰিয়াছেন তাহাৰ অখণ্ডনীয়তা সামান্য চিন্তা কৰিলেই উপলব্ধ হইবে। তাঁহাৰ সিদ্ধান্ত প্ৰচলিত মত হইতে ভিন্ন। প্ৰশ্নগুলি যথাক্ৰমে নিৰ্দেশ কৰিতেছি :—

- ১। আত্মবন্ধার্থ অনিষ্টকাৰীৰ অনিষ্টকৰণ কতদূৰ ন্যায্যানুগত ?
- ২। পৰহিতার্থ অনিষ্টকাৰীৰ অনিষ্টকৰণ কতদূৰ ন্যায্যানুগত ?
- ৩। আত্মবন্ধার্থ অনিষ্টকাৰীৰ প্ৰতি অসত্যাচৰণ কতদূৰ ন্যায্যানুগত ?
- ৪। পৰহিতার্থ অনিষ্টকাৰীৰ প্ৰতি অসত্যাচৰণ কতদূৰ ন্যায্যানুগত ?

প্ৰথম প্ৰশ্নেৰ উত্তৰে গ্ৰন্থকাৰ বলেন “প্ৰাণনাশ বা তত্তুল্য অপূৰণীয় আসন্ন আশঙ্কাস্থলে যে পৰিমাণ অনিষ্ট কৰা সেই ক্ষতি-নিবাৰণেৰ নিমিত্ত আবশ্যক তাহা বোধ হয় ন্যায্যানুগত বলিতে হইবে।” (২৬৪-৬৫ পৃঃ)। পৰিশেষে বিচাৰ কৰিয়া গ্ৰন্থকাৰ সিদ্ধান্ত কৰিলেন “অতএব অনিষ্টকাৰীৰ অনিষ্টকৰণ কেবল উপবিউক্ত সঙ্কটস্থলে, যেখানে অতি গুরুতৰ অপূৰণীয় ক্ষতি-নিবাৰণেৰ উপায়ান্তৰাভাব, সেইখানে ন্যায্যানুগত বলা যাইতে পাৰে।”

দ্বিতীয় প্ৰশ্নটিৰ তুল্যভাবেই সমাধান কৰিয়াছেন। “শক্তি কতি যদি অপূৰণীয় হয় ও তাহা নিবাৰণেৰ উপায়ান্তৰ না থাকে, তবে তাহা নিবাৰণ নিমিত্ত আত্মহিতার্থে যেকপ পৰহিতার্থে সেইকপ অনিষ্টকাৰীৰ অনিষ্টকৰণ ন্যায্যানুগত।”

তৃতীয় প্ৰশ্নেৰ সমাধান অপেক্ষাকৃত জটিলতৰ। গ্ৰন্থকাৰ এককটি দৃষ্টান্তদ্বাৰা প্ৰশ্নেৰ জটিলতা প্ৰকটিত কৰিয়াছেন। যদি কেহ দস্যুহস্তে পতিত হইয়া অৰ্থ দিয়া বা অৰ্থদানেৰ অঙ্গীকাৰে বা তাহাকে ধৃত কৰিবাৰ চেষ্টা কৰিবেন না এই প্ৰতিজ্ঞা কৰিয়া নিকৃতিলাভ কৰেন, তবে তাঁহাৰ পক্ষে প্ৰতিজ্ঞা ভঙ্গ কৰা ন্যায্যানুগত কিনা ? মাৰ্টিনো ও সিজ্‌উইকেৰ মতে এস্থলে প্ৰতিজ্ঞাভঙ্গ দোষেৰ নহে। গ্ৰন্থকাৰ তাঁহাদেৰ সহিত একমত হইতে অসমর্থ হইয়াছেন। তাহাৰ মত সুস্পষ্ট। “সত্য বলা আত্মকে সুব্যক্ত কৰা। অপূৰ্ণতা-প্ৰযুক্ত যদিও তাহা সৰ্বদা কৰিতে আমবা অক্ষম, সেই অক্ষমতা অন্ততঃ স্বীকাৰ কৰা উচিত, তাহা চাৰ্জিবাব চেষ্টা কৰা অবিধি।” (২৬৯-৭০ পৃঃ)। তবে যদি প্ৰতিজ্ঞাপালনেৰ ফলে সৰ্বস্বান্ত হইতে হয় এবং আশ্ৰিতগণেৰ ভৰণপোষণ অচল হয়—“সৈকপ স্থলে দুৰ্বল মানবকে বোধ হয় প্ৰতিজ্ঞাভঙ্গ কৰিতে হইবে। কিন্তু তাহা ভাল কাৰ্য্য হইল মনে না কৰিয়া কাতবভাবে সন্তপ্তচিত্তে নিজের অপূৰ্ণতাৰ ফলভোগ হইতেছে বলিয়া বোধ কৰা উচিত” (১৭০ পৃঃ)। দস্যুকে ধৰাইয়া না দিবাৰ প্ৰতিজ্ঞা কিন্তু অন্য সমস্যা। যদি সমাজেৰ অনিষ্ট হইবাৰ আশঙ্কায় পৰহিতার্থে অসত্যাচৰণ কৰিতে হয় তবে সমাজেৰ প্ৰতি কৰ্ত্তব্যই প্ৰবল হইবে। তবে উভাও অপূৰ্ণতা-নিবন্ধন অক্ষমতা এবং অপৰিহাৰ্য হইলেও ইহা বৈধ হইল মনে কৰা যাইবে না।

‘পারিবারিক নীতিসিদ্ধি বর্ষ’ শীৰ্ষক অন্যায়ে মান্য-নিবাহ-সম্বন্ধে গ্রন্থকান সন্নিহিত আলোচনা কৰিমাছেন। সাধাৰণতঃ অল্প বয়সে নিবাহ হওয়া উচিত—ইয়া গ্রন্থকানের সিদ্ধান্ত। আন তিনি স্বপক্ষে ও বিপক্ষে যুক্তিৰ আলোচনা বৰিয়া অপদপাতে সিদ্ধান্ত নিৰূপণ কৰিমাছেন। বিনয়-বিবাহসম্বন্ধে গ্রন্থকাৰেৰ অভিনত গভীৰ চিন্তাপ্রসূত। নিবাহ মানব-জীবনেৰ প্ৰধান সংস্কাৰ এৰং সমাজ ও জাতিৰ মূল ভিত্তি। এ বিষয়েৰ আলোচনা কোন কালেই নিশ্চলমোড়ন কৰিয়া নিৰেচিত হইবে না। বৰ্তমান কালে অৰ্থনৈতিক কাৰণ এৰং সামাজিক অন্তহান পৰিৱৰ্তনে অল্প বয়সে নিবাহ অপ্রচলিত হইয়াছে এৰং অনুচ ও অনুচাৰ সংখ্যা ক্ৰমেই বৃদ্ধি পাব মত ভাবতৰ্কার জটিলতৰ সন্মত্যান আকাৰ ধাৰণ কৰিতেছে। সে জন্য মনে কৰি পুনৰায় স্যাব ওকদাগেৰ সমাধান সমাজ-বিশেষত্ব অনুসৰি আলোচনাৰ বিষয় হইলে কল্যাণেৰ পথ অভিভাঙ হইতে পাবে।

প্রবন্ধের বলেবব বাড়িয়া যাইতেছে। সে বান্ধে সংস্পর্শে বজ্রব্যন উপসংহান বনিব।
- স্যাব গুরুদাসের আন্তিক্যবুদ্ধি, স্ববর্গনিষ্ঠা, অনাড়ম্বর ও নিরভিমান ধর্মাচরণ আখ্যায়িকাবানে বহু
দিন প্রচলিত ছিল এবং বোধ হয় এখনও তাহা লুপ্ত হয় নাই। যদি বোন মহদয় ব্যক্তি এই সমস্ত
আখ্যায়িকা সত্যানুসন্ধানপূর্বক সংগ্রহ করিয়া গ্রন্থাকারে নিবদ্ধ করেন তবে অনেকেই উপকান
হইবে। কিন্তু তাঁহার বর্গনিষ্ঠা গোঁড়ানি-পর্যায় ফেলা যায় না। তাঁহার ধর্মবিশ্বাস বিচারবুদ্ধি-
প্রণোদিত ও শাস্ত্রমূলক। জাতিভেদের উপর তাঁহার শ্রদ্ধা অশুণ্য ছিল—বিস্তৃত তাহা অন্য জাতির
প্রতি ঘৃণা বা অবজ্ঞার উপর প্রতিষ্ঠিত ছিল না। নিম্নশ্রেণীর হিন্দুদের প্রতি ক্রিপা ব্যবহার করা
কর্তব্য সে সম্বন্ধে গ্রন্থকারের অতিমত উদ্ধৃত করিতেছি—বর্তমানে “নিম্ন শ্রেণীর জাতিরা অনেক
উন্নতি লাভ করিয়াছে, সুতরাং তাহারা আদরের যোগ্য হইয়াছে। তাহাদের এখন পূর্বমত অনাদর
করিতে গেলে তাহাদের প্রতি অন্যায় ব্যবহার করা হইবে, এবং সমাজেরও অপকার করা হইবে।
কাবণ তাহাতে বর্ণে বর্ণে বৈষম্যের উপস্থিত হইয়া হিন্দুসমাজ ছিন্নভিন্ন হইয়া যাইবে। অতএব
ন্যায়পরতা ও আত্মবল উভয়ের অনুরোধে হিন্দুসমাজের সঙ্গীণ তা পরিত্যাগপূর্বক উদারভাবধারণ

আৱশ্যক। বিবাহ ও আহান বাদ ৰাখিয়া অন্যান্য বিষয়ে নিম্নশ্ৰেণীৰ জাতিৰ সহিত আৰ্থগতভাবে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা একেধৰে হিন্দুজাতিৰ কৰ্তব্য। তাহাই উচ্চ হিন্দুপ্ৰকৃতিৰ উপযুক্ত, এবং তাহাই উদাৰ হিন্দুশাস্ত্ৰেৰ অনুমোদিত।” (৩৫৪-৫৫ পৃঃ)। “হিন্দুৰ জাতিভেদ অনিষ্টেৰ বাধণ হইলেও তাহা একেধাৰে উঠাইয়া দেওয়া অসম্ভৱ। বিবাহ ও আহান-সহায় জাতিভেদ হিন্দুৰ অনশ্যই নানিতে হইবে। . তাৰে অপৰ সকল বিষয়ে ভিন্না ভিন্না জাতিৰ পনস্পৰ সম্ভাৱসংস্থাপন অবশ্যকৰ্তব্য, এবং এক জাতিৰ অপৰ জাতিৰে ঘৃণা বা অনাদৰ কৰা সৰ্বাতোভাবে অবৰ্তব্য।” (৪৪৯ পৃঃ)।

আমি এই প্ৰবন্ধে মাল্য গাঁথিবাৰ চেষ্টা কৰিয়াছি। নোৱ হয আগান অপটু হস্তে মাল্য-বচনান যে সৌষ্ঠৱ ও সদ্ৰতি বক্ষা কৰা প্ৰযোজন তাহা সম্পাদিত হয় নাই। তথাপি মাল্য-বচনা-বৈষম্য থাকিলেও তাহাৰ উপাদান পুষ্পগুলিৰ সৌন্দৰ্য ও সৌন্দৰ্য সকলোবই প্ৰীতি উৎপাদন কৰিবে—কানৰ তাহা শ্ৰেষ্ঠ উদ্যানেনেৰ নিৰ্বাচিত পুষ্পবৃক্ষ হইতে সমাহৃত হইয়াছে এবং সে পুষ্পোদ্যান যিনি বচনা কৰিয়াছেন তাহাৰ সৌন্দৰ্য-বোধ, বিচানশক্তি ও অনবদ্য কচি সৰ্বজনস্বীকৃত হইবই। প্ৰবন্ধকাৰ গল্পাজলে গল্পাপূজা সমাধা কৰিলেন। স্যাব গুৰুদাসেৰ মহনীয় ও পবিত্ৰ স্মৃতিপূজায় যে পুষ্পাঙ্কলি তাহাৰ চৰণ-মূলে অৰ্পিত হইল, তাহাৰ একাটি স্তবৰ ও প্ৰবন্ধকাৰেৰ নিঃস্ব নহে। তাহা তাহানই বচিত বৃক্ষবাটিকা হইতে আহৰণ কৰিলান। পূজাৰ অনিবাৰ্য সৰ্বলেনই আছে—যদিও পূজাৰ পুষ্পবাজি অনেকস্থলেই ধনীৰ উদ্যান হইতেই সংগ্ৰহ কৰা হয়। সৌভাগ্যেৰ বিষয় এহলে উদ্যানস্বামী তাহাৰ পুষ্পোদ্যান সাধাৰণেৰ অধিকাৰে সমৰ্পণ কৰিয়াছেন। বালিদাস কৰিয়াছেন—‘প্ৰতিবন্ধাতি হি শ্ৰেয়ঃ পূজ্যপূজ্যব্যতিক্ৰমঃ।’ পূজনীয়েৰ পূজাৰ অবতলা নিজেৰ মন্দিৰৰ পথ অৰ্গলবদ্ধ কৰে। জাতিৰ উন্নত অবস্থাৰ মানদণ্ড তাহাৰ মহনীয় পূৰ্বপুৰুষেৰ প্ৰতি উদগ্ৰ শ্ৰদ্ধাৰে। যখন ইহা মন্দীভূত হয় তখন বুঝিতে হইবে জাতিৰ নাড়ী ক্ষীণ হইয়া আসিতছে। স্যাব গুৰুদাসেৰ ন্যায় অসাধাৰণ পুৰুষপ্ৰকাণ্ড এই দুৰ্গত বাঙ্গালী জাতিৰ নব্যে জন্মগ্ৰহণ কৰিয়া তাহাকে মজীমান্ কৰিয়াছেন তাহাই মাত্ৰ নহে—জাতিৰ সবলতা ও সজীবতাৰ প্ৰত্যক্ষ প্ৰমাণও এতাদৃশ পুৰুষগণ। স্যাব গুৰুদাসেৰ জন্মে “কুলং পবিত্ৰং জননী কুতৰ্থা, বস্ত্ৰধৰা পুণ্যবতী চ তেন।”

REPORT OF THE SIR GOOROODASS CENTENARY COMMITTEE

At an informal meeting of some citizens of Calcutta held in December, 1942, it was suggested and decided to celebrate the centenary of the Late Sir Gooroodass Banerjee, one of the illustrious sons of India. Sir Gooroodass was born on the 26th January, 1844, and the centenary of the date of his birth falls on the 26th January, 1944. Hence it was decided to begin the celebrations on the 26th January, 1943, and to conclude them in January, 1944. With this object in view letters were sent to various educational institutions and prominent persons throughout the country inviting their co-operation. There was a cordial response to this suggestion from all quarters and co-operation was promised by various public bodies and individuals. On the 26th January, 1943, the birthday of Sir Gooroodass, a public meeting of the citizens of Calcutta was held in the Calcutta University Institute under the presidency of Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M.A., B.L., D.Litt., LL.D., Barrister-at-Law, M.L.A. In explaining the objects of the meeting the President observed —

“ Sir Gooroodass was one of a band of great Indians who drank deep at the fountain of Western knowledge but refused to sell their soul or to lower their own country's flag. He was a scholar and an inspiring teacher who studied and practised Indian and Western jurisprudence and made his mark in the profession of law. He rose to be an eminent judge, painstaking, upright and independent, who not only did justice but also made everyone, who came to him, feel that justice was being done to him. As a great champion of the cause of Indian learning and languages Sir Gooroodass served the cause of education with a passionate zeal. He was India's first Indian Vice-Chancellor. A frail body that attracted for more than half a century the spontaneous reverence and affection of all classes and conditions of men, rich and poor, young and old, had as its main asset strength of character. He set before himself a standard of conduct and purity, which was not equalled by any of his contemporaries or by generations that followed him. His devotion to the immutable greatness of India's religious spirit served as an inspiration to his fellow countrymen

who regarded him as a model of life and conduct. Even during the present period of turmoil when human civilization was passing through a period of supreme crisis and India's birth-right for a free and unfettered control over her own destinies was being challenged by mighty vested interests, there was a special significance of their recalling to their mind the greatness of such a patriot-saint."

After the presidential speech the Hon'ble Mr Justice C. C. Biswas and others addressed the meeting. In paying his tribute, Mr. Justice Biswas observed that the memory of those great Bengalees like Sir Gooroodass should be kept green in the minds of the future generations of Indians and it was in the fitness of things that they had assembled there on that day to devise ways and means to celebrate the centenary of his birthday. He then moved a resolution that a General and a Working Committee be formed with Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M A., B L., D.Litt., Barrister-at-Law, M.L.A., as President of both the committees to organise in a suitable manner the Centenary Celebrations of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee during the centenary year commencing from that date.

The following was the personnel of the General Committee as constituted by the above resolution :—

Patrons :

Srimat Swami Virajanandaji, *President, Ramkrishna Mission.*

Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Darbhanga

Maharajadhiraj Bahadur of Burdwan

Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya

The Hon'ble Sir Harold Derbyshire, K.C

Mr A K Fazlul Huq, M A , B L , M L A.

Maharaja of Cossimbazar

Sir B N Mookerjee, Kt.

Mr Nalinranjan Sarkar

„ J K. Birla

„ G D Birla

Sir S Radhakrishnan

„ Asoke Roy

„ M Azizul Haque

President :

Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M.A., B.L., D.Litt., LL.D, Barrister-at-Law, M.L.A.

Vice-Presidents :

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice R. C. Mitter, M.A., M.L.

„ „ „ Dr. B. K. Mookerjee, M.A, D.L

„ „ „ C. C. Biswas, C.I.E. M.A., B.L.

Dr. R. B. Pal, M.A., D.L.

Mr W. C. Wordsworth, M.A

Dr. Bidhanchandra Roy, M.D, M.R.C.P. (Lond), F.R.C.S. (Eng.).

Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee, M.A.

„ Mramalkanti Ghose.

„ Surendrachandra Banerjee, M.A., B.Sc., F.L.S.

Vice-Chancellors of all the Indian Universities (*Ex-officio*).

Mayor of Calcutta (*Ex-officio*).

Hony. Treasurer

Rai Bahadur Prof. Khagendranath Mitra, M.A

Hony. Secretaries :

Sj. Gourimohan Mitra

Prof S. K. Chatterjee, M.Sc., B.L.

Hony. Asstt. Secretaries .

Sj Khagendralal Mitra.

„ Ganeshchandra Sinha, B.Sc., B.L.

„ Manndranath De.

„ Arunkumar Sinha, M.Sc

Members :

Dr. Pramathanath Banerjee, M.A., D.Sc

Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, M.A, D.Lit.

Mr. Sailapati Chatterjee, M.A, B.L

Dr R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D.

„ Benoykumar Sarkar, M.A.

Sj. Narendrakumar Basu, M.A., B.L

Mr. S. N. Banerjee, Barrister-at-Law

„ N. C. Chatterjee, Barrister-at-Law

Sj Ramaprasad Mookerjee, M.A., B.L

Principal B. M. Sen, M.A (Cantab.).

Principal J. K. Choudhuri, M.A.

„ Allan Cameron, M.A.

Dr. D. N. Moitra, M.B.

Kumar Bimal Chandra Sinha, M.A.

Sj. Tusharkanti Ghose.

„ Hemendraprasad Ghose.

„ Phanindranath Mukherjee.

„ Jnananjan Niyogi.

Mr. S. C. Mitter, B.Sc. (Lond.).

Dr. Kalidas Nag, M.A., D.Litt.

Sj. Satishchandra Law.

Prof. Devaprasad Ghosh, M A.

„ H. P. Maiti, M.A.

Dr. Jogeschandra Banerji, M.B.

Sj. Syamacharan Mitra, B.L.

Rai Bahadur B. B. Mukherji

Prof. Satishchandra Ghosh, M.A.

„ Sailendranath Mitra, M.A.

Principal P. K. Basu, M.A.

„ Rabindranarayan Ghosh, M.A.

„ Niranjan Niyogi, M.A.

„ Panchanan Sinha, M.A.

„ Dr. Panchanan Neogi, M.A.

Mr. J. Chakravorti, M.A.

„ Praphullakumar Sarcar.

„ Vivekananda Mukherjee

„ Amal Home.

„ Ramanikumar Duttagupta, B.L.

„ Ganapati Sarcar.

„ Tarapada Ghose, B L

Dr. Sushilkumar Bose, M.Sc., M.B.

Rai Bahadur C C. Mukherji, B.A , O.B.E.

Sj. Manoranjan Sengupta

„ Bidhubhusan Sengupta.

Prof. Anathnath Basu.

Sj. Jatiswar Sinha.

„ Sachindranath Sinha, M A.

Dr. Nagendranath Do, M R C.P., D.P M; and others.

Earlier in the day a meeting was held in the Narkeldanga Sir Gooroodass Institute with Mr Hemchandra Naskar, the Mayor of Calcutta, in the chair Srijut Haranchandra Banerji recited *slokas* from the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* and chanted Vedic hymns. The Mayor paid his tributes to the memory of Sir Gooroodass and expressed his desire that the centenary celebrations should be properly organised

The Working Committee met several times and considered and adopted the following scheme regarding the centenary celebrations :—

Time—Sir Gooroodass Centenary Celebrations will extend over a period of one year commencing from the anniversary birth date of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee on the 26th January, 1943, and ending in January, 1944.

Place—During the year the Centenary will be celebrated throughout Bengal and at different cultural centres in India as far as practicable Attempts will be made to celebrate the Centenary in as many important towns as possible

Inauguration—At the opening of the Centenary celebrations public meetings will be held to pay homage to the great patriot saint and to form a representative General Working Committee to work out a comprehensive scheme of the Centenary celebrations

Publications—An appeal and a message signed by the President in English and Bengali will be published and distributed broadcast. Short biography of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee in Bengali and English will be prepared in pamphlet and leaflet form and distributed broadcast to propagate his life and character to the young men of the country Attempts will be made to republish his works, *A Few Thoughts on Education*, *Jnan O Karma* and other books. Attempts will be made to republish "The Reminiscences, Speeches and Writings of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee" Attempts will be made to publish a centenary memorial volume It is to be a work of permanent value dealing with different aspects of Indian thought and culture which had influenced the life of Sir Gooroodass to be written by eminent Indian scholars and they will be invited to co-operate in this task of preparing the Commemoration Volume.

Popular lectures and Radio talks—Popular lectures on the life and character of Sir Gooroodass from different standpoints will be arranged in different parts of Calcutta as also in important towns in Bengal and outside of Bengal. Radio talks will be arranged to broadcast his ideals and also the main traits of his life and character.

Special Centenary Lectures—With the help of the Universities, Associations and Societies attempts will be made for special cultural lectures in connection with Sir Gooroodass Centenary Celebrations

Sir Gooroodass Centenary Week—In order to focus public attention and interest a Sir Gooroodass Centenary Week will be held at some convenient time. This may consist of a series of public lectures, discussions on various aspects of social life in Bengal during the last one hundred years, *kirtans* and other semi-religious entertainments and an exhibition

Essay Competitions—Essay competitions will be held and suitable prizes be offered

Exhibition—Attempts will be made to hold an Exhibition of the Art and Culture of 19th Century-Bengal of which Sir Gooroodass was a shining product. Relics and manuscript writings of Sir Gooroodass and letters written by eminent persons to him and other important exhibits relating to his life and times will be a special feature of this Exhibition.

The following appeals in Bengali and English were issued under the signature of the President Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee :—

“Of the galaxy of illustrious sons of Bengal, who have won the high esteem, deep reverence and grateful affection of their countrymen by virtue of their exemplary character, profound learning, steady uprightness and indomitable spirit of independence, Sir Gooroodass deserves our special remembrance. As a profound scholar and an inspiring teacher, as a great idealist and a stern realist, as an eminent jurist and an upright judge, as a sturdy champion of the cause of Indian learning and a staunch advocate of the religious, moral and social ideal of India, Sir Gooroodass's name is a household word in Bengal, nay, in India. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that to commemorate the birth centenary

of this noble son of Bengal and to disseminate the high ideals he cherished, celebrations should be held during the next twelve months throughout the length and breadth of this province of his birth as well as at different cultural centres in India as far as practicable. The programme includes popular lectures and Radio talks, special cultural addresses, essay competitions, exhibition and the publication of a centenary commemoration volume. With a view to giving a practical shape to the programme of celebrations to be held the Sir Gooroodass Centenary Committee send forth this appeal to our countrymen, irrespective of caste, creed, or nationality and invite the generous assistance and hearty co-operation in every possible way of all schools, colleges, universities, associations, learned societies and public bodies. The Centenary Committee hopes that our countrymen will not fail to rise equal to the occasion and make the celebrations a success."

নিবেদন

“ বঙ্গমাতার যে সকল কৃতী সন্তান স্বীয় আদর্শ চবিত্র, অগাধ বিদ্যাবত্তা, দৃঢ় সত্যতা এবং অদম্য স্বাতন্ত্র্যবোধের জন্য দেশবাসীর গভীর শ্রদ্ধাভক্তি ও স্নেহ অর্জন কবিয়াছেন তন্মধ্যে সাব গুরুদাস বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়ের নাম আমাদের বিশেষরূপে স্মরণীয়। প্রগাঢ় পণ্ডিত ও হৃদয়স্পর্শী শিক্ষাদাতা, একাধারে মহান্ আদর্শ ও বাস্তবতাবাদী, শ্রেষ্ঠ আইনজ্ঞ ও ন্যায়পৰ্যায়ণ বিচাবক, ভারতীয় সংস্কৃতি, ধর্ম, নীতি ও সমাজঘটিত আদর্শের বিশিষ্ট বাবক ও সেবক সাব গুরুদাসের নাম বঙ্গের তথা ভারতের প্রতি গৃহে কীর্তিত হইয়া থাকে। বাংলার এই সুসন্তানের জন্মশতবার্ষিকীর স্মৃতিবন্ধা এবং তাঁহার চিবপোষিত উচ্চ আদর্শের প্রচাবকল্পে আগামী একবৎসবকালব্যাপী এই প্রদেশের সর্বত্র এবং যথাসম্ভব ভারতের বিভিন্ন সংস্কৃতি-কেন্দ্রে উৎসবের অনুষ্ঠান করা দেশবাসী সকলেরই অবশ্য কর্তব্য। তদুদ্দেশ্যে সাব গুরুদাস শতবার্ষিকী সমিতি উৎসবের এক কার্যক্রম নির্দ্ধাবণ কবিয়াছেন। বক্তৃতা, বোতাবযোগে আলোচনা, সাংস্কৃতিক ভাষণ, প্রবন্ধ প্রতিযোগিতা, কৃষ্টি প্রদর্শনী, শতবার্ষিকী স্মারক-গ্রন্থ প্রণয়ন প্রভৃতি কার্যক্রমের অন্তর্ভুক্ত হইয়াছে। এই কর্মসূচী কার্যে পবিণত কবিবার মানসে শতবার্ষিকী সমিতি জাতিবর্গ নির্বিশেষে দেশবাসী সকলের নিকট নিবেদন জানাইতেছেন এবং স্কুল, কলেজ, বিশ্বে বিদ্যালয়, সঙ্ঘ, সভা-সমিতি, পবিষদ ও জনহিতকর প্রতিষ্ঠান সমূহের সর্বপ্রকার আত্মবিক সহানুভূতি ও আনুকূল্য বাগনা কবিতেন।

শতবার্ষিকী সমিতি আশা কবেন যে সহৃদয় দেশবাসী এই সদনুষ্ঠানে যোগদান কবিয়া ইহাকে সাফল্য মণ্ডিত কবিবেন। ”

The Working Committee decided to publish a Commemoration Volume dealing with various aspects of Sir Gooroodass's life and his contributions to our national culture and to invite prominent scholars and public men to contribute to it. An outline scheme

for the proposed volume was prepared and letters inviting contributions were issued. The proposal was cordially received by all and contributions were promised from various quarters. Prof. Anathnath Basu, M.A., has been entrusted with the task of editing it. The volume is under preparation. We have to convey our grateful thanks to the Vice-Chancellor and the Senate of the Calcutta University, for agreeing to bear all costs for printing and publishing the volume. The Senate of the Calcutta University have also decided to name the University Chair of English as the Sir Gooroodass Banerjee Professorship of English to perpetuate his memory and connection with the University.

The Working Committee prepared the following programme for the celebrations in Calcutta :—

Programme for Sir Gooroodass Centenary Celebrations

DATE	TIME	PLACE	
<i>Sunday, 23rd January, 1944</i>	9 A M	Calcutta University	<i>Inauguration of the Centenary Week Chanting of Vedic hymns, Readings from Scriptures, etc., by Pandit Asokenath Sastri, M A President—Sj. Devendranath Mookerjee, M A., B L.</i>
	5 P M	Asutosh College Hall, Bhowanipur	<i>Public Meeting President—The Hon'ble Mr Justice C- C Biswas, C I E, M A, B L Speakers— Mr Narendrakumar Basu, M A, B L Rai Bahadur B B Mukherji Dr D N Moitra Prof Batuknath Bhattacharyya</i>
<i>Monday, 24th January, 1944</i>	6 P M	Calcutta University Institute	<i>Kirtan by Kutan-Kalanidhi Sj Bhupendranath Basu President—Prof Manmathanmohan Bose, M A.</i>
<i>Tuesday, 25th January, 1944</i>	5 P M	Asutosh Hall, Asutosh Building, Calcutta	<i>Kishore Sammelan President—Dr Kaidas Nag, D Litt Chief Guest—Sj Dakshinaraman Mitra-majumdar Speakers—Sj Bimal Ghose „ Sunumal Basu „ Akhil Neogi „ Gajendrakumar Mitra „ Swami Premghanananda Prof Khagendranath Sen</i>
<i>Wednesday, 26th January, 1944</i>	8 30 A M	Narkeldanga Sir Gooroodass Institute	<i>SIR GOOROODASS CENTENARY DAY Garlanding the portrait of Sir Gooroodass by Dr Sundarimohan Das (President) Reading of extracts from the Gita and the Upanishads by Sj Haranchandra Banerji, M A, B L</i>
	5 P M.	Senate House, Calcutta University	<i>Opening of the CENTENARY EXHIBITION by Mr. Syed Badruddoza, Mayor of Calcutta (President) Public Meeting Subject—"Sir Gooroodass and Nationalism" Introductory speech by Dr. Mookerjee. Speaker—Rai Bahadur Gopalchandra Ganguli</i>

DATE	TIME	PLACE	
<i>Thursday, 27th January, 1944</i>	5 P M	Senate House, Calcutta University	Public Meeting <i>President</i> —Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee <i>Subject</i> —"Sir Gooroodass and Our Education" <i>Speakers</i> —Hon'ble Sir Azizul Haque Dr Sumit Kumar Chatterji, D Lit ,, Panchanan Niyogi, M A, Ph D Dr Benoykumar Sarkar Rai Bahadur Khagendranath Mitra, M A
<i>Friday, 28th January, 1944</i>	5 P M	Senate House, Calcutta University	Public Meeting <i>President</i> —Sj Ramaprasad Mookerjee M A, B L <i>Subject</i> —"Sir Gooroodass—The Man" <i>Speakers</i> —Prof Joygopal Banerjee, M A Mahamahopadhyay Pandit Jogen- dranath Tarka-Vedantatirtha <i>To be followed by</i> —Maynadal Kirtan
<i>Saturday, 29th January, 1944</i>	5 P M	Senate House, Calcutta University	Public Meeting <i>President</i> —Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan <i>Subject</i> —"Sir Gooroodass and Our Cultural Heritage" <i>Speakers</i> —Swami Pabitrnananda of Ramakrishna Mission Dr Pramathanath Banerjee, M A, D Sc, Barrister-at-Law, M L A (Central) <i>To be followed by</i> —Sj Jnananjan Niyogi on DYNAMISM IN BENGAL'S LAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS illustrated with slides

N B—Sir Gooroodass Centenary Exhibition will be opened on Wednesday, the 26th January at 5 P.M. and will remain open up to the 31st January, from 1 P.M. to 6 P.M.

The Centenary Week Celebration commenced from the 23rd January, 1944, and ended on the 29th January, 1944. Messages on the occasion were received from various public men prominent in the cultural life of the country and also from the Vice-Chancellors of the Universities of Nagpur, Bombay, Lucknow, Agra, Dacca, Travancore, Patna, Panjab, Aligarh, Benares, Calcutta; President, Ramkrishna Mission, the Secretaries of the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Indian Research Institute, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, National Council of Education, Bengal, Viswabharati, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta University Institute, Bengal Hindu Mahasabha

The Centenary was observed in a number of institutions and we received reports of such celebrations from among others the following.—Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta University Institute, Narasinha Dutt College, Calcutta Medical College, College of Engineering and Technology, Jadavpur, Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad, Hare School, Narkeldanga George High School, Sir Gooroodass Institute, Bally Saraswati Pathagar Celebrations were

also held in Dacca, Barisal, Berhampur, Bankura, Simla Hills and Delhi. Some students of Simla and Delhi and *Manimelas* of *Ananda Mela* partook in essay competitions.

The following is a short summary of the celebrations organised by the Centenary Committee at Calcutta.

On the morning of the 23rd January the inauguration ceremony began at the Calcutta University Institute Hall with readings from the *Vedas* and scriptures followed by *Kirtan*.

In the afternoon a largely attended public meeting was held at the Asutosh Memorial Hall, Bhowanipur, under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice C. C. Biswas, where glowing tributes to the memory of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee were paid.

Mr. Justice Biswas in paying tributes referred to Sir Gooroodass as a true leader of the nation whose contributions to our national life would remain a constant source of inspiration to the posterity. He regretted that the younger generation was not fully conversant with the life and activities of this great man, and he felt the absence of an arrangement for educating the younger generation on the life and teachings of the great men of the country.

On Monday, the 24th January, at 6 p.m. there was *Kirtan* in the Calcutta University Institute by *Kirtan Kalanidhi* Sreejut Bhupendranath Bose. There was a large audience on this occasion.

On Tuesday, the 25th January at 5 p.m. a *Kishore Sammelan* was held at the Asutosh Hall, Calcutta University. Dr. Kalidas Nag, D.Litt., presided and Sreejut Dakshinaraman Mitramajumdar was the chief guest. Swami Premghanananda (*Arup*) organised this function and Sreejut Bimal Ghose (*Moumachi*) read the Argha on behalf of the boys and girls.

In this connection we may also report a very successful rally of children organised by the *Mani Melas* (Children's Associations) of *Ananda Mela* (Children's section of the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*) held on the 18th April, 1943, in the Calcutta University Institute. S. J. Dakshinaraman Mitramajumdar was in the chair and S. J. Haranchandra Banerjee was the chief guest. S. J. Praphullakumar Sarkar, Editor of the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, inaugurated the celebrations.

On Wednesday, the 26th January, 1944, which was the centennial anniversary of the birthday of Sir Gooroodass, meetings

were held in different parts of the country. The University had already notified the schools and colleges for observing the day as the Sir Gooroodass Day and many meetings were held in schools and colleges.

We include here the reports of three functions held in Calcutta :

Dr Sundarimohan Das presided over a meeting at Narkeldanga Sir Gooroodass Institute Hall, Narkeldanga, where Mr. Haran-chandra Banerjee recited *slokas* from the *Gita* and the *Upanishads*

Presiding over a meeting at the Medical College, Calcutta, in the morning of the same day, Sir Bijayprasad Singh Roy said " If Sir Gooroodass was great as a jurist; as a judge or as an educationist he was certainly much greater as a man His love for truth, his impartiality as a judge, his unimpeachable integrity as an administrator, his sweet reasonableness as a public man, his selfless devotion to duty as a citizen, his championship of the cause of advancement of learning without expecting either official favour or popular applause, his humility though not at times unmixed with sternness of a real Brahmin, his filial devotion and above all his unshakable resolve to follow the path of justice and fairness in all spheres of life—contributed to the greatness of Gooroodass as a man "

Sir Gooroodass " combined imagination with practical reasoning and strongly advocated utilisation of the knowledge and system of education of both of the East and of the West His Note of Dissent to the Report of Lord Curzon's University Commission which proposed officialisation of higher education and disaffiliation of second grade colleges speaks a volume of Sir Gooroodass Banerjee's courage of conviction for maintaining the independence of our educational institutions This was one monumental service he rendered to the cause of education in this country, when the entire system was faced with serious crisis "

The most interesting function held on the day was the opening of the Gooroodass Centenary Exhibition by Syed Badruddoja, Mayor of Calcutta, in the Senate House

In inviting the Mayor to open the Exhibition Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee said that the exhibits bore testimony to the greatness of the man born so many years ago It was also a curious coincidence that Sir Gooroodass was born on January 26th which

many years after his death, had been declared as the Indian Independence Day.

In declaring the exhibition open the Mayor said that Sir Gooroodass was one of the pioneers of Indian Renaissance, who had dedicated his life for upholding the ideals and traditions of Indian culture at its best and it was only proper that we should celebrate the Centenary of his birthday and pay homage to his revered memory.

Divided into nine sections, containing some 400 exhibits the Exhibition displayed (a) printed works and publications, including books, reports, minutes, articles and addresses by Sir Gooroodass; (b) Manuscripts and Letters; (c) Letters and memorials addressed to Sir Gooroodass by eminent persons; (d) Papers, addresses, etc., relating to the recognition of services of Sir Gooroodass; (e) Papers relating to his activities, public as well as private; (f) Presentations, caskets, certificates, etc.; (g) Articles of personal use; (h) Portraits of Sir Gooroodass of all ages and (i) objects lent by the University of Calcutta. The published and unpublished writings of Sir Gooroodass betrayed his multifarious interest as an educationist and administrator, lawyer and litterateur of constructive penetrating vision. Besides these, the wonderfully accurate coloured maps drawn by him as a school boy, his compositions as a dramatist and poet, his dissertations on Mathematics and Phonetics excited the admiration of many. Another section which aroused the interest of the visitors was that of the letters addressed to him by eminent persons of his days. It afforded a glimpse of the giants of the last generation, heroes of modern India to the young students of this age. Letters from Lord Curzon, Harcourt Butler, Beatson Bell, Woodroffe and Woodburn, A. M. Bose, Asutosh Mookerjee, Chandramadhab Ghosh, Asutosh Chaudhuri, Sankaran Nair, Ameer Ali, Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad, Motilal Ghosh, Mahendralal Sarkar, Rani Swarnamoyee, N. G. Chandravarkar, Rameschandra Dutt, Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay, Nabinchandra Sen, W. C. Bonnerjee, Surendranath Banerjee, Rajnarayan Bose, Maharaja Jatindramohan Tagore and a host of others, showed the wide range of acquaintance and friendship. Two letters from Rabindranath very significantly expressed the great esteem and admiration in which Sir Gooroodass was held by the Poet. A gold watch and

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chain presented by the Nawab Nazim of Murshidabad, Knighthood Seal and Letters Patent re appointment as Judge and Vice-Chancellor, the silver casket and memorial addresses were other visible records of recognition of his services from the rulers as well as his countrymen. Among other interesting exhibits, were the Register of Honorary degrees, containing signatures of Sir Gooroodass and other eminent men of the East and West who had been conferred the honorary degrees by the Calcutta University, the educational charts prepared by the Teachers' Training Department and the portraits of 26 past Chancellors and 33 Vice-Chancellors of the University adorning the walls of the hall.

The Exhibition proved to be a success and it drew large crowds daily. It was kept open till the 31st January.

On Thursday, the 27th January at 5 p.m. a meeting was held at the Senate House under the presidency of Dr Syamaprasad Mookerjee. The services rendered by Sir Gooroodass Banerjee to the cause of education were recalled by a number of prominent speakers including Sir Azizul Haque, Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Dr. Panchanan Niyogi, Dr Benoykumar Sarkar, Prof Mohanmohan Bhattacharyya, and Rai Bahadur Prof Khagendranath Mitra.

Dr Mookerjee said that Sir Gooroodass was among those who took the lead for adopting Bengali as the medium of teaching. To-day Bengali had been adopted as the medium of teaching up to Matriculation standard. But if they were to respect the wishes of Sir Gooroodass they ought not to rest until Bengali was introduced as the medium of teaching up to the M.A. Examination. Sir Gooroodass also felt the necessity of placing scientific and technical education on a sound and permanent footing. He realised that unless this was done a nation could not make any progress in its onward march.

Sir Azizul Haque said that it was for the lead given by Sir Gooroodass in the years 1904-1905 that Bengali was adopted as the medium of instruction in the Calcutta University. “ We look forward to the days for complete reorientation of our educational system within the framework of our Universities,” Sir Azizul added.

On Friday, the 28th January, a public meeting was held at the Senate House under the presidency of Mr Ramaprasad Mookerjee.

“ Sir Gooroodass, the Man ” was the subject matter of an ex-

tremely illuminating address given by Prof Joygopal Banerjee. Paying his tribute Prof. Banerjee said that Sir Gooroodass Banerjee could not be viewed "compartmentally" He possessed a balanced personality which was a synthesis of *Jnana*, *Karma* and *Bhakti*. He could be very well considered as a symbol of Indian culture. He developed himself according to the ideal of the *Gita* and was an ideal Brahman Mahamahopadhyay Jogendranath Tarkav Vedantatirtha also spoke. Mr. Ramaprasad Mookerjee spoke of his personal contacts which revealed many facets of Sir Gooroodass's life The meeting was followed by *Maynadal Kirtan*.

On Saturday, the 29th January, the concluding celebration was held in the Senate House Addressing a crowded meeting there Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan said :-

"When on all sides we come across homes of hunger and prisons of poverty it is the duty of every religious man to take up the challenge offered by them and remove these blots on our civilisation." "Religion, as we understand it from Sir Gooroodass, is not abstention from activity when there is so much pinching poverty, under-nourishment and disease He who tolerates wrongdoing for long or acquiesces in the wrong is himself a wrong-doer."

The speaker continued :

"The central force of Sir Gooroodass's life of which all his other activities were an expression, was the equality of religion. Sir Harcourt Butler said to him in 1915 that the ideals of Hinduism of which he was a great exponent contained perhaps the corrective of the world maladies. He said this during the last war. Until the all-pervading materialism was knocked down, until building of societies rested on secure foundation of religion, there can be no peace To-day the world is noisier, more controversial and more violent There is more hope and more uncertainty, more aspiration and more frustration and the years that intervened showed utter bankruptcy of the religious spirit The Versailles Treaty, the League of Nations and Disarmament Conference failed because they had not the background of public opinion to sustain them.

"This war, again, when it is won, may prove to be the breeding ground of other wars if the peace is not saved It can happen only if powerful nations cease to take pride and glory in possessions

which are based on the shame and slavery of weaker nations. This is perhaps what Sir Harcourt means when he said that the principles of Hinduism contain the essential elements for saving the world civilisation. Some of us might perhaps feel when we look at the cleavage caused by religion in this country and the world whether this is right. If anything is required for saving India and the world it is religion in its large, comprehensive and universal sense. Religion is not a mere routine or a ritual; it is not a state of scruples which will impede the very exercise of one's faculties; it is not a prejudice, superstition or a blind habit. It is the sheet anchor of the human soul in the Divine. It is the light of the alone for the Alone."

Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee thanked Sir Sarvapalli for his speech and said that the world could not live on materialism alone. Though India was politically dependent there was something in her religion which would live for all time to come. India had a message to give to the world and she would give it when the time for post-war reconstruction of the world came.

Swami Pabitananda of Ramakrishna Mission and Dr. Pramathanath Banerjee, M L A (Central) also spoke on Sir Gooroodass's life.

This was followed by S. J. Jnananjan Niyogi's "Bengal's Last One Hundred Years."

So concluded the Centenary Celebrations.

During the Centenary year the Committee have received unreserved assistance which they would gratefully acknowledge, from the various newspapers and periodicals inspite of paper control.

In concluding this report the Working Committee have also to convey their cordial thanks to all those persons and organisations who kindly helped ungrudgingly in bringing the Centenary Celebrations to a successful conclusion. Its success in these difficult times and in the midst of the untold sufferings all round has proved beyond doubt that the sacred memory of Sir Gooroodass, is still cherished by his countrymen and that to-day as ever, there is every need for us to remember him and his ideals.

